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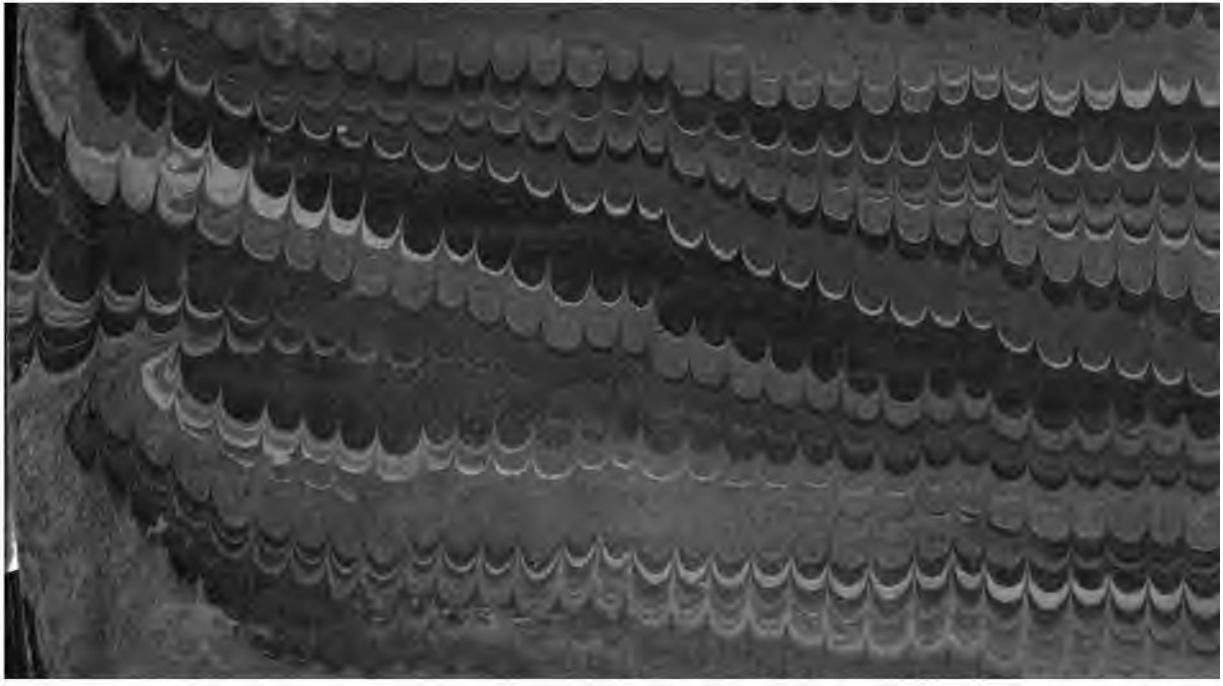

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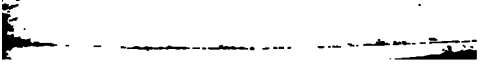

The CHARACTER of

Dr *GROSVENOR*'s MOURNER.

THE late Excellent JAMES HERVEY, M. A. in a Letter to a Friend, on Occaſion of the Death of a near Relation, expreſſes himſelf thus, "Give me Leave "to preſent you with, and recommend to you on this me- "lancholy Occaſion a repeated Peruſal of Dr *Groſvenor*'s "MOURNER; *or, The Afflicted Relieved:* which is a moſt "valuable Gem; and as it is written in Numbers, like "the *Spectators*, it will not weary your Attention; I am "ſure you ſtand in need of the Conſolations and Helps "therein adminiſtred. I am never without ſome of theſe "little Books, to give away to my Acquaintance under "Afflictions, eſpecially on their Loſs of dear Relations, "and valuable Friends, for which Purpoſes I think it one "of the moſt judicious and univerſally uſeful Books extant, "and well deſerves to be tranſlated into the Language of "every Nation where Chriſtianity is profeſſed."

See Mr HERVEY's Letters, Vol. II. Letter CI.

Dr *STONHOUSE*, in his *Friendly Advice to a* PATIENT (Ninth Edit. Page 37.) thus recommends the ſame Treatiſe.

"THIS excellent little Piece is written in ſhort Eſſays, "after the manner of the *Spectators*; I always keep a "Number of them by me, to diſtribute as Opportunity "ſerves, immediately after the Death of ſome of my Pa- "tients, whoſe Families appear to ſtand in need of the "Conſolations therein given; and who have ſhewn, dur- "ing my Attendance, a proper Temper and Diſpoſition "to peruſe and profit by them."

THE MOURNER:

OR,

THE AFFLICTED RELIEVED.

BY

BENJAMIN GROSVENOR, *D.D.*

THE FIFTH EDITION.

As one that comforteth the Mourners. JOB 29. 25.

To him that is afflicted, *Pity ſhould be ſhewed.* JOB 6. 14.

Cur doleas, ſi periiſſe non credis? TERTULL.

LONDON:

Printed for GEORGE KEITH in Gracechurch-ſtreet.

M. DCC. LXV.

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TO THE

MOURNERS,

Whoſe later Sorrows have been eſpecially regarded in the following Papers.

My Dear Friends,

AS ſoon as you caſt your Eyes upon this little Piece, ſome of you will immediately think of the good Husband who is no more; or of the tender Parent who has given the laſt Bleſſing. Others will remember the dear Wife, the *Deſire of your Eyes*; the pretty Child, in whoſe

Life your own ſeemed to be *bound up*; the Brother will come into mind, who was *as your own Soul*; and the excellent Friend, who ſometimes *ſticketh cloſer than a Brother*. I have had all theſe Caſes in my Eye; and with a Sympathy that can only ariſe from ſome Experience and Benevolence in Conjunction, have endeavoured to aſſuage and improve your Sorrows at the ſame time.

It is ſomewhat neceſſary to have been acquainted with Grief, in order to addreſs ſuitably to the Tenderneſs of its Nature; to obviate the Subtelety of its Pleas, and Pretenſions for Exceſs, and to manage its Operations and Effects. There is danger, otherwiſe, of increaſing the Anguiſh we would alleviate, and

the

the Wound is made to bleed afreſh*: Even Balm itſelf may be painfully applied.

There are, indeed, ſome Wounds that will heal of themſelves. Give them a little Time, and the Stock of Sorrow is not ſo great but it will quickly be ſpent: The haſty Showers will ſoon be over. But the real *Mourner* is apt to have the Reaſons of his Anguiſh continually before him; and to be more intent upon waſting his Spirits than his Sorrows: Fond of Solitude and Silence, that he may indulge his Paſſion, and provoke the Emotion of that Grief which is ready to devour him; taking a ſort of Pleaſure to lie down under its Oppreſſion, and becoming a willing

* *Curando fieri quædam majora videmus*
Vulnera, quæ melius non tetigiſſe fuit.

a willing Prey to its furious Diſorders. Upon offering to ſpeak, they reply eagerly, "It is an eaſy Matter to talk; "you would limit my Grief, and "not ſuffer its Vent; but if it were "your own Caſe you would reſign "yourſelves up to it, or faint under "the Preſſure of ſuch a Calamity." The firſt Onſets of Sorrow do indeed call for Compaſſion more than Advice: We are *to mourn with them that mourn.* The Silence of *Job*'s Friends, *becauſe they ſaw his Grief was very great,* was more to the Purpoſe than any thing they could ſay. It would be inhuman to deny the *Relief* of Mourning, when Mourning itſelf is often its own *Relief.* But is there any Harm in preſcribing Bounds to it? By what Rule of common

Senſe

Senſe ſhould Grief be left unlimited, more than any other Paſſion? Why ſuch coſtly Sacrifices as Health and Life, and the Comforts of both, to a Calamity that you think has carried off too much already? We may pay the Tribute of a few Tears to the Memory of ſome dear Objects; but then, *Religion* ſays, we ſhould *weep as if we wept not*, becauſe there will ever be more Occaſion of Joy to a good Man, than of Sorrow: And *Philoſophy* ſays, it is a needleſs Aggravation of Miſery to faint under our Pains; and not have Courage to ſuffer thoſe Misfortunes, which it is not in our Power to avoid.

Should the Pilot abandon the Helm in the Violence of a Tempeſt? Should Reaſon and Grace be leaſt

hearkened to, when their Dictates are moſt ſeaſonable, and their Maxims moſt needful? Has not this Weakneſs of Mind betrayed abundance of People into thoſe Extremities, that are a Diſgrace to human Nature, and a Reproach to the Chriſtian Character?

Ye Children of Affliction, break the Tide of Sorrow by throwing it into different Chanels; and direct its Courſe ſo as to make it uſeful, by employing its Influence to ſpiritual Purpoſes. It will be more eaſy, at ſuch a time, to convert *the Sorrow of this World*, that *worketh Death*, into that *godly Sorrow* that *worketh Repentance unto Life.* So other natural Paſſions may be ſanctified, by making them aſſiſt in the Exerciſe of

ſpiritual

ſpiritual Grace. It is a tender Time, while the Soul is more ſuſceptible of Impreſſion, and turns more eaſily, as the ſoftened Wax to the Seal. As Thankfulneſs is a proper Graft upon the Joys of Proſperity when the Heart is inlarged, ſo will godly Sorrow be ſeaſonable to a mournful Occaſion; and the rather, becauſe this is one great End of God in all our Afflictions.

I know not whether it has been obſerved or no; but to me it ſeems, that the *Meaſures of Mourning* are repreſented to leſſen in proportion as Men are nearer to God. The *People of God* under the Old Teſtament, were forbid thoſe Signs of Sorrow that were common among the *Gentiles*, as cutting themſelves,

and tearing their Hair. It was their Glory to have God *ſo nigh to them.* The Prieſts among them were not allowed thoſe Expreſſions of Sorrow which were indulged to the People. The Prieſts were nearer to God, and miniſtring before him. The *Nazarite*, who by a ſpecial Separation was moſt nearly devoted to God, had the leaſt to do with Mourning or its Forms, *becauſe the Conſecration of his God was upon his Head*; Numb. 6. 7. The Chriſtian Church, who are brought nigh by the Blood of Chriſt, a peculiar holy People, and a royal Prieſthood, are laid under this Prohibition, that *they ſorrow not as do others*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 13. Neither as other *Jews*, nor other *Gentiles*. Among Chriſtians, the Apoſtles being

ing neareſt to God in Holineſs and Spirituality, were the beſt able to *rejoice in Tribulation. As ſorrowful, yet always rejoicing.* And, to mount the laſt and higheſt Step of this Gradation, *Heaven*, where we are neareſt of all to God, *there ſhall be no more Sorrow*; Rev. 21. 4. *everlaſting Joy ſhall be upon their Heads; Thanksgiving, and the Voice of Praiſe. In thy Preſence is Fulneſs is Joy; at thy Right Hand are Pleaſures for evermore.*

The moſt comfortable Thoughts in this Caſe, and ſuch as make up the very Cordial of Conſolation, belong only to a truly good Man, and can only be reliſhed by ſuch a one. Why do you oppoſe a Man of *this World* with Arguments drawn

from *another?* You talk of Heaven, and he minds nothing but Earth. You propoſe the calm healing Thought of the divine Approbation, with the Pleaſure and Honour of God's Favour, to a Man who ſays unto God, *Depart from us; we deſire not the Knowledge of thy Ways.* You preach the Conſolations of God, which are not ſmall, to one who knows no Conſolation but in *Corn, and Wine, and Oil.* What Comfort to a Man from the Thoughts of the Shortneſs of human Life, whoſe greateſt Trouble is that it is ſo ſhort, or elſe is apprehenſive that the End of theſe Troubles will begin thoſe which ſhall never end? He has no more Title to this true Comfort, than he has

has a Fitneſs for it, the good Man only being qualified for, and capable of this. Chriſtian Conſolations belong only to Chriſtians: They are of no Uſe to others, who have *neither Part, nor Lot in this Matter*, no more than in that Heaven from whence they are derived. They ſuppoſe a Diſpoſition capable of them, as the Rudiments of any Science are previous to the Operations of that Science; but the promiſcuous Application of theſe Comforts to all ſorts of Characters, is mere Quacking in Divinity, inſtead of approved
o Remedies and fair Practice. *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him; becauſe he hath ſhewn unto them his Covenant.* Others muſt go to *Cicero*, *Seneca*, or *Plutarch de*

Conſo-

Conſolatione; and try what their Flouriſhes and general Reaſoning will do. The Aids of ancient Philoſophy, how dry, how inſufficient they are, will appear from a few Paſſages, which I take leave to borrow from Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*, one of the beſt of Writers upon the beſt of Subjects, *The Excellency of the Chriſtian Religion.*

" Some pretended to doubt whe-
" ther there was any ſuch Thing as
" Senſe or Pain; and yet when any
" great Evil was upon them, they
" would certainly ſigh and groan as
" pitifully, and cry out as loud as
" other Men.

" Others have ſought to eaſe
" themſelves by maintaining that
" Afflictions were no real Evils, and

" there-

" therefore wiſe Men ought not to
" be troubled at them: But he muſt
" be a very wiſe Man indeed that can
" forbear being troubled at Things
" which are very troubleſome; and
" yet thus *Poſſidonius* diſtinguiſhed,
" as *Cicero* tells us. He could not
" deny Pain to be *very troubleſome*,
" but he was reſolved *never to ac-*
" *knowledge it to be an Evil.* But
" ſure it is a very ſlender Comfort
" that relies on this nice Diſtinction,
" between Things being trouble-
" ſome, and being Evils; when all
" the Evil of Affliction lies in the
" Trouble it creates to us. And
" when the beſt that can be is made
" of this Argument, it is good for
" nothing but to be thrown away

" as

" as a ſtupid Paradox, and againſt
" the common Senſe of Mankind.

" Others have endeavoured to
" elude their Trouble by a graver
" Way of Reaſoning: That theſe
" Things are fatal and neceſſary;
" and that we ought not to be
" troubled at what we cannot help.
" But this only proves the Trouble
" to be as fatal as the Calamity that
" occaſions it. And, perhaps, *that*
" *a Thing cannot be helped*, is one
" of the juſteſt Cauſes of Trouble to
" a wiſe Man; as *Auguſtus* ſmartly
" replied, to one who adminiſtred
" this Comfort to him on the Fa-
" tality of Things: This was ſo far
" from giving any Eaſe to his Mind,
" that,

" that, ſays he, *This is the very*
" *Thing that troubles me* *.

" Others have tried to divert and
" entertain the Troubles of other
" Men, by pretty and plauſible Say-
" ings, ſuch as this, That, if Evils
" are long, they are but light; *if*
" *ſharp, but ſhort:* and a hundred
" ſuch like. Now I am apt to ima-
" gine, that it is but a very ſmall
" Comfort that a plain ordinary
" Man, lying under a ſharp Fit of
" the Stone for a Week together,
" receives from this fine Sentence:
" For what Pleaſure ſoever Men,
" who are at Eaſe and Leiſure, may
" take in being the Authors of witty
" Sayings, I doubt it is but poor
" Conſolation, that a Man under
great

* *Hoc ipſum eſt quod me malè habet.*

" great and ſtinging Afflictions can
" find from them.

" The beſt moral Argument to
" Patience, in my Opinion, is the
" Advantage of Patience itſelf. To
" bear Evils as quietly as we can,
" is the way to make them lighter
" and eaſier: But to toſs and fling
" and be reſtleſs, is good for no-
" thing but to fret and enrage our
" Pain, to gall our Sores, and make
" the Burden upon us ſit more un-
" eaſy. And this is properly no
" Conſideration of Comfort, but an
" Art of managing ourſelves under
" our Afflictions, ſo as not to make
" them more grievous than indeed
" they are.

" But now the Arguments that
" Chriſtianity propounds to us, are
" ſuch

" ſuch as prove a juſt and reaſon-
" able Encouragement for Men to
" bear Affliction patiently." And then the Author mentions " the Ex-
" ample of Chriſt and the firſt
" Chriſtians; the Glory that ſhall
" follow the light *Afflictions of this*
" *preſent Time:*" And cloſes this Part of his Subject with a Paſſage in the " Life of *Lipſius*, who was a
" great Studier and Admirer of the
" Stoic Philoſophy. When he lay
" on his Death-bed, and one of his
" Friends who came to viſit him
" ſaid, That he need not uſe Argu-
" ments to perſuade him to Patience
" under his Pains, the Philoſophy
" which he had ſtudied ſo much,
" would furniſh him with Motives
" enough to that Purpoſe; he an-

" ſwers him with this Ejaculation;
" *Domine Jeſu, da mihi patientiam*
" *Chriſtianam*; that is, *Lord Jeſus*
" *give me Chriſtian Patience.* No
" Patience like that which the
" Conſiderations of Chriſtianity are
" apt to work in us."

This is one Inſtance of the Excellence of the Chriſtian Religion, its furniſhing us with the beſt Motives and Conſiderations to Patience, under the Evils and Afflictions of this Life.

All the other philoſophical Thoughts, ſo far as they are of any Uſe, the Chriſtian can take and make his beſt of; and when they fail, he knows where to go. He can turn to God, and ſay; *Pſalm. cxix. 82. When wilt thou comfort me?*

me? If thou doſt not, all the World cannot. Without Thee, *miſerable Comforters are they all.* If thou doſt not ſpeak Peace, there will be no End of my Trouble. This Balm is only to be found in *Gilead. Say unto my Soul, I am thy Salvation:* Say, *Be of good Chear; thy Sins be forgiven thee.* And then will I ſay, *In the Multitude of my Thoughts within me thy Comforts delight my Soul: Thy Comforts!* Comforts that come from God, which lead to him, and are fully to be enjoyed in him. The Light of thy Countenance, the Senſe of the Pardon of my Sins, an Intereſt in the Promiſes of the Covenant of Grace, a Conqueſt of Self-will, and conſequently of every other Enemy: Peace of

Conſcience, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt; the Hope and Proſpect of Eternal Life near, and not the leſs pleaſant on that Account *: Theſe are Conſolations indeed that are *not ſmall.* There are two Things alſo ſaid of thoſe divine Comforts, that give them infinite Advantage above all other; they are *ſtrong*, and they are *full.* They are *ſtrong Conſolations*; Heb. vi. 18. Others are too weak to bear much Weight. A Soul in all its Heavineſs finds they are not *Affliction proof:* They cannot ſtand under the Troubles of Life, much leſs will they do againſt the Terrors of Death and Judgment. But the Comforts that are truly Chriſtian will

* O vitam verè vitalem, ut ait Ennius, omnibus bonis et gaudiis circumfluentem! Sed beatam etiam *meditemur, quæ* ad beatiſſimam vitam aditum aperiat.

Cic. Conſ.

will bear a Man up when every thing elſe fails about him, the World ſinking under him, and all is a going. The other thing ſaid of theſe divine Conſolations, is, that they are *full*: As Chriſt ſaid to his Diſciples, *Let not your Hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe alſo in me. Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that your Joy might be full.*

To have a God to apply to who is the *Father of Mercies, and the God of all Conſolation*; the God that *comforteth them who are caſt down:* To have an Intereſt in Chriſt, by whom we *have Acceſs unto the Father*; whoſe Grace is *ſufficient for us in every Time of Need:* To have the *Spirit, the Comforter* by Office, to do his Office to us, and diffuſe that

Joy and Peace in believing, which are Part of the Kingdom of God, and the Fruits of the Spirit: To have the holy *Scriptures* to go to, that were written on purpoſe that we, *through Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures, might have Hope.* Theſe are, in compariſon to all other Comforts, as the *Fountain of living Waters* to the *broken Ciſterns* that can hold no Water.

Prayer gives Eaſe to the Mind, revives Faith, Hope and Patience; promotes Holineſs, as well as fetches down Comfort: It is, in ſhort, the true Way of handling our Weapons againſt our ſpiritual Adverſaries. *Put on the whole Armour of God: Praying with all Prayer.* And the true Way of applying our ſpiritual

Remedy:

Remedy: *Is any afflicted, let him pray.*

Beſides the *Mourner* for departed Friends, the *Afflicted* on other Accounts will here find ſome Relief under the Troubles of Life. The Nature of Submiſſion, and the Arguments and Motives of Acquieſcence, do very much agree to both. They have ſuch an Affinity, that one can hardly be treated of without touching upon the other. As, in laying down the Map of any Kingdom, ſome Borders of the neighbouring Nations will appear. They are but different Ingredients of the ſame bitter Cup, put into the Hands of mortal Men.

He uſually behaves beſt, who is beſt prepared, who has not his

Weapons to ſeek when they are to be uſed; nor his Armour to be put on, when the Attack is begun *. It is obſerved that none are more confounded when Calamity comes, than thoſe who are moſt careleſs to prevent it. Principles muſt be fixed, before they can be uſed; and frequent Practice muſt ſettle Habits, before we can enjoy the Benefit of that Eaſe with which they exert themſelves. Of all People they ſuffer moſt, who will not allow you to mention beforehand the Death of a beloved Object, nor themſelves to think of any ſuch Thing, *Do not ſpeak of it; I cannot bear the Thoughts*

* Nec verò quiſquam doloris impetum excipere, ac fortiter perpeti poſſet, niſi ſe prius ad obſiſtendum comparaſſet: ex quo conſuetudo fit, quæ callum obducit animo, noſque contra omnes vel naturæ vel fortunæ *impetus armat.* Cic. *Conſ.*

Thoughts of it: To be ſure I ſhall run diſtracted. And ſo, partly for Quietneſs ſake, and partly from Complaiſance, not a Word is ſaid of the Matter; the dear Thing is clapt to the Heart; it clings, and grows to the Affections; and when ſnatched away, no Wonder if the Parents grieve and lament. They ſeem to have had no Notion of their dear Creature's being mortal: It overſets them at once, becauſe they have no Conſideration about them to hinder its doing ſo; nothing that can weaken the Influence of their Vexation. Whereas he is a wiſe Man indeed, who prepares both for his own Death and the Death of his Friends; who ſo improves his Foreſight of Troubles, as to abate the

Uneaſineſs of them; and puts in practice that Philoſophic Reſolution I have read of, with which I conclude this Addreſs: *I am thinking with myſelf every Day, how many Things are dear to me; and after I have conſidered them as temporary and periſhing, I prepare myſelf, from that Minute, to bear the Loſs of them without Weakneſs.*

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THE MOURNER.

SECT. I.

Allowances made to the Mourner, and which will be made both by God and Man.

SOME Allowance will ſurely be made for our natural Averſion to Troubles, by Him who knows our Frame. *No Affliction for the preſent being joyous but grievous*; it is well if afterwards it *produces the peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs.* The Man muſt feel; the Chriſtian will ſubmit. The Grace that exalts us to the Dignity of being the Children of God, does not lift us intirely above the Affections and Paſſions which are common to Men: But what is better, it governs them by its Laws, and uſes them to its own Purpoſes; and doth not eradicate but perfect our Nature.

There is a great Difference in the Conſtitutions of Men. That which melts down one Perſon, ſhall hardly warm another. Where there is a Predominance of the ſofter Paſſions, every Bowel ſhall move within them; and, like the ſenſitive Plant, they ſhrink in, and are affected with the ſmalleſt Touch.

Surpriſe, upon the firſt Invaſion of an Evil; the ſudden News of ſuch a Loſs, may be too hard for a Man that has a good Command of himſelf. He muſt recover himſelf; he muſt rally the Forces of Reaſon and Religion: When the Shock is over, he will better perceive it might have been more decently born.

It is no Crime to be ſenſible of the Greatneſs of our Loſs, nor to feel the Pain of it. Inſenſibility is no Virtue, has no Glory in it, will have no Reward. The great *Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep*, Gen. 23. 2. without any Diminution to his great Character. Jeſus himſelf wept over *Lazarus*; which he would not have done, had there been any thing unſeemly in dropping a Tear over a departed Friend. *Devout Men carried Stephen to his Funeral, and made great Lamentation*; and yet they were devout Men. "Human Nature is framed with ſuch Senſes and Paſſions as, "according to God's Intentions, will be affected "ſuitably to their Objects: And, if the Soul acts "rationally, it is moved accordingly. And if we "conſider the End for which Afflictions are ſent, "namely, for our Amendment, it will appear ne"ceſſary that they ſhould be felt; for if we have "*no Senſe of* the Blow, how ſhall we ſubmit to

"the

" the Hand that gives it? If our Affections are " ſeared againſt all painful Impreſſions, God is then " defeated in the beſt Means of our Awakening; " for he that is not ſenſible of his Affliction, will " continue ſecure in his Sin *."

There are two Extremes ever to be avoided under Troubles: The one is ſlighting the Affliction, as if we ſcorned to feel it, like a mere Accident, not to be regarded: The other is ſinking under it, as if we had no Help to go to, but would fling up all in ſullen Deſpair; inſtead of endeavouring to attain the End God himſelf aims at in the Diſpenſation. Both theſe Extremes are cautioned againſt: *My Son, deſpiſe not thou the Chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked*, Heb. 12. 5. If you deſpiſe the Chaſtening, you may provoke him to ſay, " I will make you feel, before I have done " with you;" and ſo draw upon you more Strokes, as they did, *Thou haſt ſtricken them, but they have not grieved; thou haſt conſumed them, but they have refuſed to receive Correction: they have made their Faces harder than a Rock; they have refuſed to return*, Jer. 5. 3. And what followed this affected Inſenſibility, in which they hardned themſelves againſt God and his Providence? They made Matters ten times worſe, and ſuffered many Evils inſtead of one. *Wherefore the Lion out of the Foreſt ſhall ſlay them*, ſome fierce and cruel Enemy. *The Wolf of the Evening ſhall ſpoil them*, ſome greedy and devouring Enemy. *The Leopard ſhall watch over their Cities; every one that goeth out thence, ſhall be torn in Pieces*; ſome watchful cunning Ad-

* Dr BATES.

verſary: *Becauſe their Tranſgreſſions are many, and their Backſlidings are increaſed*, Jer. 5. 6.

How much better is it for me to ſay with the Church, *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him?* I will bear it as well as I can; and will endeavour to bear it as well as I ought. *My Wound is grievous; but I ſaid, Truly this is a Grief, and I muſt bear it*, Jer. x. 19.

The particular Circumſtances of Trouble in my Caſe, are all under his compaſſionate Eye. The Degrees of Bitterneſs in my Cup, with every Ingredient, were of his own mixing: It is the *Cup which my Father gives me to drink.* He will allow the Degrees of Sorrow to be in proportion to the Degrees of Affliction. That Degree of Sorrow may be a Sin in one Affliction, which is but decent in another. The Bloſſom ſoon withers, and the Flower fades; the fair Bloſſom, the beautiful Flower: — But *all Fleſh is Graſs.* One Chanel of my Pleaſure is dried up, it is but one Chanel; or if more, the Fountain is ſtill open, and can never run dry. I may mourn the Loſs of what was ſo neceſſary to me, with a Degree of Sorrow beyond what is due only to a Convenience of Life. The Loſs of one upon whom our All depends, not only the Comfort and Delights, but the very Support and Livelihood of a Family; how deep muſt that Wound be? And who can forbid it to bleed, where Extremities to be ſuffered, come in the room of Endearment and Delight enjoyed? *Job* loſt his Children, his Eſtate, his Health, his Peace; *heavy as the Sand of the Sea* was his Grief! But here comes a Mourner, *and ſays;* I have loſt all this in one Perſon: *I was*

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at Eaſe, but thou haſt broken me to Pieces. A Widow and Fatherleſs Children; a poor Widow and Fatherleſs; ſick, as well as poor; deſerted by Friends, perſecuted by Enemies; how many Degrees of Anguiſh are here beyond the Sorrow only of being a Widow? How allowable for ſuch a one to ſay, (and ſuch a one there has been) *Even to Day is my Complaint bitter; my Stroke is heavier than my Groaning*, Job 23. 2.

Grief muſt have a Vent: Sorrow may expreſs itſelf. I may ſigh, and weep, and tell my mournful Story to God and Man: *In all this Job ſinned not. As for me, is my Complaint to Men? And if it were ſo, why ſhould not my Spirit be troubled?* Job 21. 4. It is in vain to complain to Men. I will turn my Complaint to God: He will allow me to complain to him, though I muſt not complain of him. *I cried unto thee with my Voice, and made Supplication. I poured out my Complaint before him: I ſhewed before him my Trouble*, Pſalm 142. 1, 2. There is a Pſalm on purpoſe for the Afflicted, with this Title: *A Prayer of the Afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his Complaint before the Lord*, Pſalm 102. When a Man is ſo afflicted as to be overwhelmed with it, he may complain; he may complain even *before the Lord:* Nay, he may pour out his Complaint. Another while he ſays, *I am ſo troubled I cannot ſpeak.* Anguiſh in Extremity will ſometimes ſtrike dumb, and at another Time pour out Complaints. My Sorrows are great, becauſe my Loſs is ſo. Thou knoweſt, O Lord, more than myſelf, how

bitter in many reſpects this is likely to prove. What a Gap is made in the Comfort of my Life? What Troubles are like to come in at this Breach, like a Flood? Whither ſhould I carry my Sorrows and Cares, but to thee who careſt for me? My Friends are quickly weary of my Complaints: It is burdenſome to them, though it relieves me. Thou art the Father of Compaſſion: All weeping Eyes lift up themſelves to thee, and every ſighing Prayer from the Ends of the Earth. *Hear my Prayer, O Lord; and let my Cry come unto thee. Hide not thy Face; incline thine Ear. My Heart is ſmitten, and withered like Graſs, ſo that I forget to eat my Bread; or I mingle it with Aſhes, the Bread of Affliction, and the Water of Affliction.* My Courage fails; my Spirits are waſted by the Greatneſs of my Sorrow; *by reaſon of the Voice of my Groaning, my Bones cleave to my Skin: I am like a Pelican in the Wilderneſs*, a lonely, ſolitary Creature. *I watch, and am like a Sparrow upon the Houſe Top:* I decline Society by Day, and am deprived of Sleep by Night. *I have eat Aſhes like Bread, and mingled my Drink with Weeping, becauſe of thine Indignation, O Lord; for thou haſt lifted me up, and caſt me down:* Pſalm 102. 1—10. Heal the Wound which thou haſt made. Surely there is Balm in *Gilead*, and a Phyſician there? Aſſuage my Grief by thy Conſolations, which are not ſmall. Relieve my Lonelineſs by a great deal of thy ſenſible Preſence. Give me ſo much more of thy Company, that I may find I am *not alone, becauſe the Father is with me.* My Light is gone out

out in Darkneſs: Let the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſe upon me, with Healing under his Wings. Retrieve the Damage and Loſs as far as may be, by the Methods of thy Providence. *I am oppreſſed: Undertake for me.*

I may open my Sorrows to Men too, if I can get any who will beſtow the Charity of hearing my Story. It will eaſe the Mind; it will draw forth ſomething of Relief from our Thoughts; it will direct and engage their Prayers; it will extort ſome Pity: And it is ſomething to be pitied in Affliction. *Job* miſſed of this, when he had Reaſon to expect it. *He hath put my Brethren far from me; and mine Acquaintance are verily eſtranged from me. My Kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar Friends have forgotten me: They that dwelt in mine Houſe. I called my Servant, and he gave me no Anſwer: I intreated him with my Mouth. My Breath is ſtrange to my Wife:* She turned away from me. And all refuſe the kind Office to a poor afflicted Man when he moſt needs it. *All my inward Friends abhorred me; and they whom I loved are turned againſt me. Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my Friends; for the Hand of God hath touched me. To the Afflicted, Pity ſhould be ſhewn.*

The moſt earneſt Prayer to God for the Removal of an Affliction, or Support under it, is very conſiſtent with intire Submiſſion to the Will of God; and is allowed to the Mourner. Nothing could be more ſubmiſſive in a mere Man than that of *David: I was dumb, and opened not*

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my Mouth, becauſe thou didſt it. Dumb, to all murmuring Language, but not to Prayer: For the very next words are, *Remove thy Stroke far away from me: I am conſumed by the Blow of thine Hand*, Pſalm 39. 9, 10. But a greater than *David* is here. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt was the perfect Pattern of Patience; and yet none ever prayed more earneſtly than he that the *Cup might paſs from him*; and, *being in an Agony, he prayed more earneſtly*, Luke 22. 42. *With ſtrong Cries and Tears*, when in the Days of his Fleſh, he ſpake the Language of Fleſh and Blood. He prayed earneſtly; with ſtrong Cries and Groans. Importunately; for he prayed three Times, as St *Paul* beſought the Lord thrice; and with great Humility, proſtrate upon the Ground. And yet this Earneſtneſs, Importunity, and Humility, was all conſiſtent with that Submiſſion; *Nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* Behold the Deſires of Nature, and the Reſignation of Grace! Nature ſays, *Let this Cup paſs:* Grace ſays, *Let thy Will be done.* It is no Rebellion againſt the Will of God to deſire that an Evil may be removed; but when we do inſiſt upon it to be removed, in a manner whether God will or no: That is, when we rage and ſtorm, if we have not our Will; or take ſinful Courſes to obtain it.

I am allowed the diligent Uſe of all proper Means, all lawful and appointed Means of removing Affliction. If I cannot prevent it, I will remove it; if I cannot remove it, I will bear it; if I cannot bear it, my next Concern is, that ſinking under

under it may be rather my Calamity than my Crime; and only prove the Occaſion of a freſh Act of Reſignation to the Method he chooſes hereby of *delivering me from all Evil.*

SECT. II.

When may our Mourning be eſteemed exceſſive and immoderate,

WHEN the Loſs of ſome one Mercy ſhall deſtroy the Senſe and Reliſh of thoſe that remain, is not that exceſſive? "Let him take all, "ſays Paſſion, ſince he has deprived me of this." But what if God ſhould take us at our Word? How much more miſerable ſhould we be, than it is poſſible for any one Loſs to make us? Are all the Mercies that remain worth nothing, becauſe this one is taken away?

The Comfort of other Relations, the Accommodations of Life, the Health of Body, the Capacities of Mind; a Share in the Pleaſure of Angels, in Contemplation of delightful Truths, and Senſe of the Divine Favour; the Means of Grace, an Intereſt in Chriſt, the Pardon of Sin, and the Hope of Glory. Muſt all theſe Things be as nothing, becauſe the Child is dead, or the Huſband, or the Wife is gone before? Is not this enough to provoke God to go on, and make a full End of all? And to ſay in his Wrath, "Since theſe Things are "not worth owning, they are not worth continu-

"ing;

" ing: I will take them away. Go, Death, and " kill the Huſband that is left, or cut off that " Wife, or Child, or Friend. Go, Sickneſs, and " ſmite the Body with Diſeaſe and languiſhing " Weakneſs: Take away the Health that is left, " ſince it is eſteemed as nothing now. Go, Re- " proach and Calumny, and blaſt the Reputation. " Loſſes and Croſſes, take a full Commiſſion to " make what Ravages you pleaſe in an Eſtate that " cannot now be enjoyed."

Mourner. Ah, but the Flower of all my Comfort is gone! *The Glory is departed!* I anſwer: Thy Glory is to do the Will of God, and bear the Burden he lays upon thee. This ſecures eternal Glory. Be thankful you are out of Hell. All is Mercy on this ſide Hell. And if he has added to that many other Mercies, that are ſpared to thee, though often forfeited, as well as that which is gone; let the Enjoyment of that Remainder be an Allay of Grief, and a comfortable Motive to Thankfulneſs.

When we are ſo taken up with our own Sorrows, as to regard Nobody's elſe, we exceed. When all our Concern for the Sorrows and Joys of others, and eſpecially of the Church of God, are entirely ſwallowed up in our private Griefs; this is to be too much ſhut up within our ownſelves, and confined within the little Circle of our own Affairs. If a Piece of good Public News will not make a Mourner ſmile; if a National Deliverance will not make him forget to weep, at leaſt for ſome Time; it is a Sign of none of the beſt Spirit. The Public *may juſtly* leave him to his own Bitterneſs. *Eli's*

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Family-Afflictions were great; but the public Loſs broke his Heart.

When our Sorrows utterly unfit us for the Duties of Religion and the Services of Life, for any conſiderable Time, then they are exceſſive. You were overſet at firſt. The Storm came down upon you unprepared; but do not make it your Choice to be overwhelmed. God hath taken away that Perſon, and you will not pray. Why, is there nothing now worth aſking for? Will God ſupply you with Breath for nothing but Sighs and Groans? If this Blow will not bring you upon your Knees, he can ſtrike another. It is deſperate Language to ſay, Let him ſtrike; there is nothing now wherein he can hurt me. God expects to hear from you another Way: *If any be afflicted, let him pray.* God knows how it eaſes the Mind, and brings in Help. You cannot meditate. You can ſit alone for Hours together, thinking upon a dead Creature. Methinks the living Saint in Heaven ſhould have a little of our Heart: It ſhould not always dwell in a Coffin, and in a Grave. Methinks the ever-living God is the more ſeaſonable Object to turn the Mind to. The dear One is dead, *but the Lord liveth, and bleſſed be my Rock*, Pſalm 18. 46.

Mourner. I can think of nothing elſe.

Anſwer. There lies the Exceſs of your Grief. But is that the Way to Comfort, to turn our Back upon the *Father of Mercies, and the God of all Conſolation?* You will not meet him in the Cloſet, or in the Sanctuary, becauſe ſuch an one is dead: That is, you will not have to do with God, becauſe you are in a Condition wherein you moſt need

need his Aſſiſtance. God requires nothing of you impoſſible, or indecent; only let it be ſeen, that the dead Creature was not your God, but He that lives for ever and ever.

When our Sorrows make us heedleſs of the Deſign of God in our Affliction, and of the Leſſons we ſhould learn from his Providence, then are they immoderate. *My Soul is weary of my Life*, ſays *Job*, Chap. 10. 1. and yet in his Anguiſh, he is for inquiring into the Cauſe and Deſign of his Troubles. *I will ſay unto God, Do not condemn me: Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me*, verſe 2. To be condemned of God, was what he feared more than any Affliction; for that indeed would be a much more dreadful Thing. The Way to avoid that Condemnation, is to find out what God contends with us for; to remove it by Repentance, and then it will be pardoned by his Grace.

When we refuſe to be comforted, it ſhows that our Grief is ſwelling beyond its Boundary, and ready to overflow all. As *Jacob*, when he thought his Son *Joſeph* was dead: *Jacob rent his Clothes, and refuſed to be comforted*, Gen. 37. 34, 35. And ſo did another Mourner we read of, *Lamentation and bitter Weeping*; *Rachel weeping for her Children, refuſed to be comforted for her Children, becauſe they were not*, Jer. 31, 15. If *Rachel* will refuſe Comfort from the Word of God, and the Suggeſtions of Friends, ſhe muſt go without it; ſhe muſt mourn on, and weep on. To want Comfort is an Affliction; but to refuſe it, when offered, is a Sin. *A Time may* come wherein you would be glad

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to have it if you could, or if there were any to adminiſter it. The Anguiſh of Spirit may be too great to admit it preſently. *David* was ſo troubled he *could not ſpeak:* And the Iſraelites in *Egypt* were in ſuch Anguiſh, they could not hear the comfortable Overtures of *Moſes*. *Moſes ſpake unto the Children of Iſrael, but they hearkned not unto him for Anguiſh of Spirit, and for cruel Bondage,* Exod. 6. 9. But to refuſe Comfort on purpoſe that Grief may ſwell to the greater Height; to feed your Paſſion with freſh Fuel, and ſtir it up with aggravating Thoughts; this is not the way to have our Sorrows eaſy or innocent.

When Nature, Grace, and Time, ſhall have done their Part toward the Settlement of their Minds, and they have got over it pretty well, ſo that the Wound ſeems to be cloſed; they ſhall tear it open again, and make it bleed afreſh, by the Help of certain *Mementos*, that ſeem to be kept on Purpoſe for that cruel Service; a Lock of Hair, a Picture, a Relick of Wearing Apparel; or ſuch like Memorandum.

Mourner. Muſt we then forget our Relations as ſoon as they are gone? Do you think I ſhall ever forget that dear Creature?

Anſwer. But cannot we remember them without forgetting God and ourſelves, and ſcandalizing our Religion? If we loved them ſo well, is there any Danger of forgetting them too ſoon, that we ſhould need Art and Monitors? Remember what was good, to imitate it; what was lovely to be thankful for it. But as for theſe Provocatives of

of Sorrow, if I cannot view them with Patience and Moderation, I am not to be truſted with them. *Rachel* would have had her Son's Name *Bennoni*, a Son of Sorrow: *Jacob* knew that would have been a perpetual reminding him of the ſorrowful Occaſion of his Name, the Loſs of his beloved *Rachel*. He calls him *Benjamin*, a Son of the *Right Hand*. In ſuch a World as this, the Sorrow we cannot avoid is enough, if it be well improved.

When Sorrow is ſuffered to prey upon Health, in its Degree, or in its Continuance, it is as criminal as miſchievous. A Man may pine away his Health and Life, as well as drink them away; or deſtroy them by any other Extravagance. It wears away the Strength, and waſtes the vital Spirits. *Jacob* ſaid, that Sorrow would *bring down his gray Hairs to the Grave*. We know, by too many Inſtances, that Sorrow and Trouble will not only bring gray Hairs to the Grave, but green ones too. *Heavineſs of Spirit dries the Bones*, Prov. 17. 22. It waſtes and conſumes: So, as to prove the Truth of that Text, in the Letter of it, *The Sorrow of this World worketh Death*, 2 Cor. 7. 10.

Sometimes it kills outright, as effectually as if a Man were ſhot through. Sometimes more gradually indeed; but it then does its Buſineſs as ſurely as a ſlow Poiſon; for the Food ſeldom nouriſhes that is mingled with Tears. When the Air doth not refreſh, nor the Faculties of Nature perform their Functions, then we ſay the Heart is broke. And this is the Language of Antiquity, *as well as among us*: Witneſs the Royal Philoſo-

pher,

pher, *by Sorrow of Heart the Spirit is broken*, Prov. 15. 13. In the Bills of Mortality we ſometimes find this Article, *Died of Grief*. That Article would be much larger, and oftner inſerted, if all who died of Grief were to be diſtinguiſhed; but they are put down under the Word *Conſumption*, or any other Diſeaſe, which Grief brought upon them.

When our Spirits are ſoured, and diſguſted againſt every Thing; when our Paſſions are raiſed againſt Men, and we murmur againſt God; when we give way to hard Thoughts or Language of God, becauſe the *Lord hath dealt bitterly with us*; Ruth 1. 20. then our Sorrows have greatly exceeded their Bounds.

A Heart without Grace will bound, and ſwell, and riſe, as if it would fly in the Face of God, upon the Loſs of ſome beloved and dear Delight; and a Heart with Grace can hardly avoid ſomething like it. An afflicted Perſon is ſo apt to ſpeak unadviſedly with his Lips, that Satan took it for granted, that even ſuch a good Man as *Job* might be provoked to ſo extravagnnt a Thing as to curſe God to his Face; or at leaſt he knew, that he ſhould take the moſt likely Way to provoke him to it.

It was *David*, the Mourner, that *ſaid in his Haſte, I am cut off from before thine Eyes: Verily I have cleanſed my Hands in vain.*

It was *Jeremiah* the Mourner who uttered thoſe deſponding Words, *My Strength and Hope are periſhed from the Lord. I remember my Affliction and my Miſery, the Wormwood* and the Gall. It

was *Jonah*, in his Affliction, made that fretful Repartee, when the Lord ſaid, *Doſt thou well to be angry? And Jonah ſaid, I do well to be angry, even to Death:* If I fret myſelf to Death, *is there not a Cauſe?* Or, I will indulge my Grief and Vexation, though it coſt my Life. Surely this is the Language of Paſſion: Surely this is to go beyond the allowed Bounds.

We may exceed in the Continuance of our Grief: It may continue too long, as well as riſe too high. The Time for Mourning has been limited by all wiſe Nations; and the wiſeſt People have made it the ſhorteſt. The Egyptians, who knew not God, mourned ſeventy Days for old *Iſrael*: and his own Son *Joſeph made a Mourning for his Father but forty-ſeven Days*, Gen. 50. 3. For *Aaron Iſrael* mourned thirty Days; for *Moſes* thirty, and for *Saul* ſeven: But it is one Thing how long the Ceremony of Mourning may continue, and another Thing how long the Sorrow may endure. The Ceremony may be over when the Grief has no End but with the Mourner's Life, and he carries it with him to the Grave.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Submiſſion to the Will of God, and Reſignation to his Providence, with reſpect to our Thoughts.

SHALL I admit a Thought reflecting upon God and his Conduct? Shall my Ignorance impeach God's Knowledge? I do not ſee the Wiſdom, or the Goodneſs of this Providence! No more did *Jacob* ſee either Wiſdom or Goodneſs in his Loſs of *Joſeph*. *All theſe Things are againſt me*, ſays he; and yet, God *meant it for Good*; Gen. 50. 20.

All theſe Things are ordered by God. My preſent Condition is his Appointment. *Afflictions riſe not out of the Duſt*, though they ſometimes haſten us thither; *but out of the Mouth of the Lord cometh both Good and Evil*, Lam. 3. 38. The Origin of all Evil is Sin, and the Direction of it all is in the Hand of God. *I form the Light*, of Proſperity; *I create Darkneſs*, of Affliction; *I make Peace, and I create Evil: I the Lord do all theſe Things*, Iſai. 45. 7. We are apt to dwell upon ſecond Cauſes, and overlook the Hand of God, who, though he cannot be the Author of Sin, he can overrule the Sins of others, ſo as to be a Correction of our own Iniquity.

Shimei's ill Nature and mortal Enmity to the Houſe of *David*, made him curſe *David*; but *David* plainly diſcerned there was ſomething more

than *Shimei*'s ill Nature or Attachment to the Houſe of *Saul*, when he ſaid, *The Lord hath bid Shimei curſe David.* The Jews by wicked Hands crucified Chriſt; who yet ſaid, *It is the Cup which my Father hath given me; ſhall I not drink it?* As in a medicinal Preſcription, whatever the Ingredients may owe their Bitterneſs to, it is the Skill and Kindneſs of the Phyſician that makes it up.

Since theſe Things are ordered by God, they muſt needs have an End worthy of God to propoſe, and for me to attend to. None of his Arrows are drawn at a Venture. He always aims at ſomething, which it is worth my while to aim at too. He for our Profit. *We have had Fathers of our Fleſh, which corrected us, and we gave them Reverence; ſhall we not much rather be in Subjection unto the Father of Spirits, and live? For they verily for a few Days chaſtned us, after their own Pleaſure* and Paſſion; *but he for our Profit, that we might be Partakers of his Holineſs*, Heb. 12. 9, 10. To make us humble and holy; to improve the Graces of his Spirit in us; to purge out our Corruptions, and to mortify more the Body of Sin; to wean us from this World, that we may love it leſs, and leave it with more Eaſe; to prepare us for another World, and diſpoſe us more to go thither.

This is the Voice of the Rod; theſe the Ends of him who hath appointed it. And when theſe Ends are attained, ſomething more conſiderable is gained than what you have loſt.

Mourner.

Mourner. It is hard for me to think ſo when under the Pangs of Sorrow. It enters deep, and wounds me ſore. How can I ever ſay with *David*, *All the Paths of the Lord are Mercy and Truth unto ſuch as keep his Covenant and Teſtimony?* What, all the Paths of the Lord? The rough, and the thorny, and the difficult; where there ſeems to be nothing but Severity? Friends and dear Relations dead; Eſtate ſunk; Health impaired; Strength decaying; Difficulties increaſing on every Side: O! He has touched me in a tender Part! It is the Apple of mine Eye that the Thorn is gone into. What have the Promiſes produced to me? Might he not have taken a Method that ſhould have looked more like *Mercy and Truth?*

Anſwer. Can infinite Wiſdom be miſtaken? Can infinite Goodneſs be cruel? Can infinite Truth be falſe? Allow him that *knows the End from the Beginning*, to know better what is good for you, than you do for yourſelf; and to know how to come to his End the beſt way. Since he does not *willingly grieve nor afflict the Children of Men*; and ſince it is only, *if need be*, that we are in Heavineſs; what is it but *Mercy and Truth* that can make him do a Thing unwillingly, and does it only, *if need be?* Would it be Mercy or Truth to humour you in omitting what muſt *needs be?* You will allow him to judge of the Neceſſity of it too, for the ſame Reaſon: And then, you will ſee Reaſon to conclude, with the Royal Mourner, *I know, O Lord, that thy Judgments*

are

are right; *and that in very Faithfulneſs thou haſt afflicted me*, Pſalm 119. 75. Eſpecially when you conſider, in the next Place,

That he will make this, and all other Trials, *work together for good*. This is the general Promiſe. *We know that all Things work together for good to them that love God*, Rom. 8. 28. We know it is ſo in fact, but we know not how. Indeed that Knowledge is no Buſineſs of ours; that Part we leave to God. To believe the Truth of it, to take the Comfort of it, and to wait the Iſſue of it; that is our Part. Look upon every Trouble through the Scripture: Let God take what Compaſs he pleaſe, it will come to this at laſt. How contrary ſoever to my Liking Things are at preſent, they will all at length be juſt as I would have them. Only let me remember three or four Things:

1. Let me take care to be a qualified Object of this Promiſe. It is *to them that love God*, to them that are the *Called* or Converted, *according to his Purpoſe*, that this Promiſe is made, that *all Things ſhall work together for Good.*

2. Let me take care to be right in my Notion of Good. If I have no Notion of Good, but what relates to the Body, to the Mouth, or the Pocket, to Eating and Drinking, and other outward Enjoyments; I may never think this Promiſe fulfilled. But if I think that to be good, which is good for the Soul; and that to be good, which is good for Eternity; the Promiſe is as ſure

as

as it is rich, gracious, and comprehenſive. And when the good Things of this Life are really good for us, they are certainly included in the Promiſe, and may be expected from it.

3. Whether outward Enjoyments are good for us, or no, we muſt leave him to judge who made the Promiſe: And all the Reaſon in the World he ſhould, whoſe Goodneſs made it; whoſe Wiſdom and Power muſt make it good. They who are the Objects of this Promiſe, who love God, will let him judge for them in this Caſe. What a Soul muſt that be, that can ſay, "I will have the outward Enjoyments of this Life, whether they be good for me or not; and whether God judge them good for me or not?" Does this look like one who is the Object of that Promiſe? One who loves God, and is *called according to his Purpoſe?*

4. We muſt wait God's Time, and expect the Accompliſhment of this Promiſe only in his Way. *He that believes, makes not Haſte*; nor ſays, by Impatience, *Why ſhould we wait on the Lord any longer?* Nor by taking unlawful Ways; leſt we forfeit our Share in this Promiſe by any ſuch Miſbehaviour.

To quarrel with Providence, is to charge God fooliſhly. It is as much as to ſay that God governs the reſt of the World well enough, but not in this Particular. He orders all Affairs well but mine. When others die, and other Huſbands mourn the beloved, the ſuitable, and the amiable

Creature

Creature gone; or when other Widows weep in ſecret, and are left alone; then the Leſſon is, ALL MUST DIE: And Submiſſion was preached up, as Wiſdom, our beſt Wiſdom, as well as Duty. *Behold, thou haſt inſtructed many: But now it comes upon thee, and thou fainteſt; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled,* Job 4. 3, 5. It toûches thee to the quick: And you find the Leſſons you taught to others not ſo eaſy to learn yourſelf.

Shall the Commander of an Army be allowed to place his Men according as he knows to be beſt for the Service, whether the common Soldier knows it or not: He aſſigns their Poſts; he draws them out, and gives Command. They form themſelves in the Face of Danger; they march to the Mouth of a Cannon, or mount a Breach, though ever ſo dreadful, and all for Bread and Clothes! A Submiſſion with which we hardly honour the Captain of our Salvation, though it be for eternal Life.

SECT. IV.

Of Submiſſion to the Will of God, as it regards the Frame of our Spirit, and Temper of our Minds.

I HOPE I have learned ſomething of this Submiſſion, ſince I am come to the following Reſolves; in which, I apprehend, it does in a great Meaſure conſiſt.

Reſolved

Reſolved and agreed, that God's Will ought to determine mine, and not mine pretend to determine the Will of God. The Queſtion is put, whoſe Will ſhall be done? That Petition in the Lord's Prayer, was made for this very Caſe and Seaſon: *Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven.* I ſhould be aſhamed to ſay otherwiſe; but Actions have a Language as well as Words. I ſhould have been aſhamed to have ſaid, in Words at length, *Lord, my Will ſhall determine thine, and govern thine. I will have no Will ſuperior to my own:* But my Actions have ſaid as much; when by my Murmurs, rebellious Thoughts, ſinful Courſes, and deſperate Uneaſineſs, I have behaved ſo contrary to the Duty of a Subject, and the Relation of a Child. Lord, forgive what is paſt! And now, *Behold, here I am! Let the Lord do to me what ſeemeth good unto him*; 2 Sam. 10. 12. *Father! Not as I will, but as thou wilt*, Luke 22. 42.

Again: Reſolved and agreed, that it is Part of my Buſineſs in this World to endure what I cannot innocently avoid. What can be avoided, we may, and ought to avoid; ſince *no Affliction for the preſent is joyous, but grievous:* But what cannot be avoided by lawful Means, has the Mark of being the Will of God that I ſhould endure. And, *no Man ſhould be moved by theſe Afflictions; for you yourſelves know that we are appointed thereunto*, 1 Theſſ. 3. 3. How do I know what I am appointed to, but by being unable to avoid it without Sin, which is a worſe Evil than Suffering,

and

and comes in the room of a great Excellence, namely, a ſubmiſſive Spirit.

Farther: Reſolved and agreed, that I will neither deſpiſe the Chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when I am rebuked, *Heb.* 12. 5. To prevent which, I fly to the Aſſiſtance of his Grace. I conſider, that it is one Evidence of true Grace to be willing to bear the Will of God, as well as to do it. I call to mind the Promiſes in this Behalf made and provided. I look to the Recompenſe of Reward; and I *endure, as ſeeing him that is inviſible.* I look to that particular Bleſſing promiſed to him that endures in a right Manner. *Bleſſed is the Man who endureth Temptation; for when he is tried he ſhall receive the Crown of Righteouſneſs,* James 1. 12. *For which Cauſe we faint not: For though our outward Man periſh, our inward Man is renewed Day by Day,* 2 Cor. 4. 16.

Moreover: Reſolved and agreed, that I humble myſelf under the mighty Hand of God. *I am vile; what ſhall I anſwer thee? I will lay my Hand upon my Mouth. Once have I ſpoke, but I will not anſwer: Yea, twice, but I will proceed no farther,* Job 40. 5. that is to ſay, "I have not "a Word more to ſay; neither againſt thee, nor "for myſelf. I have ſaid too much already, "and too *unadviſedly with my Lips,* in defend- "ing myſelf, and arraigning thy Providence: I "will proceed no farther in ſuch Challenges. "Forgive what is paſt, and aſſiſt me for the "Time to come."

God

God delights to humble thoſe who will not humble themſelves, and to exalt thoſe that do. *Humble yourſelves, therefore, under the mighty Hand of God; that he may exalt you in due Time,* 1 Pet. 5. 6.

Mourner. My Sorrows are great, but ſo is my Guilt. Things are very bad with me, but they might have been worſe: And they will be better, if I can behave ſo well under this Trouble as to gain his Pity and his Favour. He has taken away, but he firſt gave.

God takes great Notice of ſuch a Frame of Spirit, and has a thouſand Ways to reward it. *Becauſe thine Heart was tender; and thou didſt humble thyſelf, the Evil ſhall not be in thy Day,* 2 Kings 22. 19. Heaven will make Amends for all Sorrows and Sufferings. Submiſſion is the Way to Heaven; and theſe Conſiderations are the Way to Submiſſion.

SECT. V.

Of Submiſſion, as it reſpects our Behaviour and Carriage.

GRIEF is ſometimes outrageous, and ſometimes ſullen. It will often ſay any Thing that comes next, without Grace or Decency; as well as ſometimes ſay nothing at all. Job ſat ſeven Days

Days and ſeven Nights ſilent, *and none ſpake a Word to him; for they ſaw that his Grief was great:* And when he did ſpeak, he curſed the Day of his Birth. *David* acted a better Part, when he got up, *anointed, waſhed, and eat*, after the Death of his Child. There is a Way of ſaying, *Thy Will be done*, by the Behaviour or Geſture; with the Eyes and Hands, as well as with the Tongue. Submiſſion is a Grace that reaches to the Behaviour, the Features, and the outward Poſtures of Body. The natural Poſtures of Grief have no Offence in them; but there are unnatural Diſtortions of Rage and Deſpair. I have ſeen ſome lift up their Eyes and Hands to Heaven as if they threatned, rather than ſupplicated the Almighty; and heard them ſay ſuch Words as only ſerved to provoke their own Sorrow and God's Anger.

How much better is it to caſt our preſent Burden and future Cares upon God, in a believing Dependance upon his Promiſes and Goodneſs? Treaſure them up in your Mind, for a ſure Recourſe upon thoſe Trials you are moſt liable to. *Lay up his Word in thy Heart*, Job 22. 22. *Thy Word have I hid in my Heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.* Let the Widow and the Fatherleſs remember, that he has promiſed to be a *Father to the Fatherleſs, and a Judge of the Widow. Thou art the Helper of the Fatherleſs*, Pſal. 68. 5. *In thee the Fatherleſs find Mercy*, Hoſ. 14. 3. *The Lord preſerveth the Stranger. He relieveth the Fatherleſs and the Widow; but the Way of the Wicked he turneth upſide down*, Pſal. 146. 9. *Leave thy Fatherleſs Children, I will preſerve them alive:*

And

And let their Widows truſt in me, Jer. 49. 11. *The Poor committeth his Cauſe to thee: Thou art the Helper of the Fatherleſs; a Father of the Fatherleſs, and a Judge of the Widow in his holy Habitation.* Let the Childleſs remember what God ſays, *That if ſuch do chooſe the Things that pleaſe me, and take hold of my Covenant, even unto them will I give within my Houſe, and within my Walls, a Place, and a Name, better than of Sons and Daughters: I will give them an everlaſting Name, that ſhall not be cut off*, Iſai. 56. 4, 5. Let the Friendleſs and Helpleſs remember, that God has promiſed to *deliver the Needy when he crieth; the Poor alſo, and him that hath no Helper*, Pſal. 72. 12. When Lover and Friend, *when Father and Mother forſake me, then the Lord will take me up*, Pſal. 26. 10. Lord remember theſe Words, *wherein thou haſt cauſed me to hope.* Promiſes were made on Purpoſe for God to fulfil, and for us to truſt in: And he that by Faith humbly depends upon them, takes the beſt Way to have theſe, or ſome others, fulfilled to his ſeaſonable Comfort and Relief. *Be careful for nothing; but in every Thing, by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, let your Requeſts be made known unto God*, Phil. 4. 6. Doth not Prayer and Supplication ſignify a Carefulneſs for ſomething? namely, that which I pray, and ſupplicate for? Doubtleſs, a Care of the right Sort, a Care of the *Means*, which is our Part; ſuch as Prayer, Supplication and Diligence; and which diſcharges us from the burdenſome Care of the *End*, which is God's Part. It eaſes us from

all diſtracting Care about the *Iſſue*. It relieves our Anxiety for God's Part, and our own alſo; which is too much for any Man alive, to have two ſuch Cares upon him at once, the Care of the *Means*, with their diligent Uſe, and the Care of the *End* alſo: That is, to have God's Care upon us, and our own too. One of theſe Cares muſt be left to God. To caſt upon God the Care of the *Means*, and to ſay, I will not pray, I will not uſe my Endeavours, is Careleſſneſs and Preſumption; neither of which are Chriſtian Graces. To take upon us the Care of the *Iſſue* and the Event, is diſtracting Anxiety, and is the Carefulneſs here forbidden, as invading God's Province. Duty is mine, ſo far as *that*, I am to care about the End. Event is God's; and *that* not being in my Power, is no Object of my Care, though it be of Concern and Expectation. It ſeems equally criminal and fooliſh to neglect our own Power, or to invade God's.

Mourner. — What if there be no Means? I ſee no Way!

Anſwer. — Then we muſt *ſtand ſtill, and ſee the Salvation of God.*

Mourner. — What if there be no Salvation?

Anſwer. — Why then I ſay, *though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him*, Job 13. 15. *I am not better than my Fathers: Let me die.* When it is come to that, we muſt do as they did, in *Acts* 21. 14. *And when he would not be perſuaded, we ceaſed, ſaying, The Will of the Lord be done.* Good Men have

have periſhed indeed from the Earth; but it is only from the Earth. They die from hence into Immortality. They are gone, but not loſt. *Some Salvation* will always be ready to crown their Faith and Patience, and expoſe the angry Impropriety of your Queſtion, *What if there be no Salvation?* Good Men may be afflicted, but cannot be miſerable. If *Dives* ſhuts his Door againſt *Lazarus*, *Abraham*'s Boſom is open. *Say unto the Righteous, it ſhall be well with them*, in this or the other World, or in both.

Let us *ſuit ourſelves to our Condition.* Let our Minds agree with our Station; our Appetites and Deſires to our Circumſtances. This is another Part of our Submiſſion as to our Behaviour. The Blow that we feel, ſhould kill Curioſity, Vanity, Luſt and Pride. If we will never poſſeſs our Souls in Patience but when they are humoured, they will ſooner be undone than ſatisfied. He who inlarges his Deſires makes the Duty of Submiſſion ſo much the more difficult; for he has ſo many more Cravings to provide for, and to be diſappointed in.

Nor ſhould we aim only at the Decency of a mere patient Behaviour, but ſhould endeavour at ſome Degree of *Chearfulneſs*, for the Honour of God, and the Ornament of Religion. Let me ſhow what my Religion can do in ſuch a Caſe, and of what Uſe its Principles are, towards the Comfort, as well as Support, of a ſorrowful Mind.

I read of ſome that could *rejoice in Tribulation*; why ſhould not I? If I am not yet able, I will

try to learn that Leſſon, hard as it appears to me at preſent. It is no Mark of the divine Favour to eſcape all Troubles. *Behold, theſe are the Ungodly, who proſper in the World, and increaſe in Riches: They are not in Trouble, as other Men*, Pſal. 73. 12. But I am ſure of this, that to bear the Hand of God, and reſign to it, becauſe *it is the Lord*, this is a Mark of his Favour and Love. This Grace beſtowed is a greater Gift than any Thing he has taken away; a greater Gain than any Thing I have loſt in my departed Comforts, or diſappointed Hopes. Common Mercies are no Proofs of ſpecial Favour; but the Grace that teaches us to joy in Tribulation, and to ſay, *Not my Will but thine be done*, comes to us with that Addreſs, *Hail thou that art highly favoured of the Lord.* And with that Privilege the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, *as ſorrowful, yet always rejoicing*, 2 Cor. 6. 10. ſorrowful in Appearance, but always rejoicing in Reality; becauſe in ſuch a Caſe there will always be to ſuch a one more Cauſe of Joy than Sorrow. *Therefore I take Pleaſure in Infirmity, in Reproaches, in Neceſſity, Perſecution, and Diſtreſs, for the Sake of Chriſt. Moſt gladly therefore will I rather glory in my Infirmity, that the Power of Chriſt may reſt upon me*, 2 Cor. 12. 9, 10. *Though the Fig-tree ſhould not bloſſom, neither ſhall Fruit be in the Vines; the Labour of the Olive ſhall fail, and the Fields ſhall yield no Meat; the Flock ſhall be cut off from the Fold, and there ſhall be no Herd in the Stall; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation*, Hab. 3. 17, 18. Whence had theſe Men

Men this Secret? Cannot I have it at the ſame Place? I come to the Throne of Grace, for this Grace and Mercy to help in this Time of Need; that I may lay all at his Feet, and bring every high Thought to the Obedience of Faith, and every tumultuous Thought into a calm Submiſſion to the Will of God; and with Chearfulneſs proclaim to all, that I am pleaſed with my Governor, however irkſome to Fleſh and Blood this Correction may be.

SECT. VI.

The Impediments that hinder this ſo reaſonable a Duty, and ſo lovely a Frame of Soul, in a Time of Sorrow.

AN *evil Heart of Unbelief*, in whatever Degree it be, does in the ſame Degree leſſen the Influence that inviſible Things ought to have upon me. If I indeed believe that Life and Immortality are brought to Light by the Goſpel, I ſhall not behave as one who thinks there is nothing in the Caſe but Death, and Parting. The Eye that is kept on the future World will not always weep. *Let not your Hearts be troubled: Ye believe in God*, John 14. 1. Is Believing then an Antidote againſt Trouble of

Heart?

Heart? Where there is no Faith, there is no Submiſſion; where there is a weak Faith, there is but a weak Submiſſion. We may expect that he will ſay to us, *Be it unto you according to your Faith.* We are not likely to endure well, without *ſeeing him that is inviſible.* And then our Submiſſion will be in Proportion to what we diſcern in God by Faith, and what we expect from him by Hope. *If ye will not believe, ye ſhall not be eſtabliſhed*; neither in Grace nor in Comfort: *But to him that believeth all Things are poſſible*, as it engages his Help, to whom all Things are eaſy. As all the Pulſes in the moſt diſtant Veins of the Body depend upon that of the Heart, ſo it is with the Movements of the Soul: *As a Man's Heart is, ſo is he*; whether it be a Heart of Faith and Patience, or an *evil Heart of Unbelief.*

Unbelief ſays, God's Hand is ſhortned that he cannot ſave, or his Goodneſs leſſened that he will not; and this indiſpoſes us to put ourſelves under his Protection. Unbelief ſays, that his Bowels are cloſed up; and why then ſhould we caſt ourſelves upon his Mercy? How can a Man part with beloved Relations, who does not believe that he ſhall either meet them again, or not miſs them? *Why art thou caſt down, O my Soul, and why art thou diſquieted within me?* ſays *David*, *why?* Whatever was the Cauſe, the Remedy was Faith and Hope. *Hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him.* They who have not Faith to believe that all Things ſhall work

work together for Good, muſt needs be a miſerable Prey to the Grief of Diſappointments. They who cannot hope in God when their Soul is caſt down and diſquieted, cannot enter into this Reſt, *becauſe of Unbelief.* Exceſſive Mourning is mourning *as thoſe without Hope.*

Self-will, or an Eagerneſs for our own Will, is a great Hindrance to Submiſſion. A Man who is impatient of croſs Words or Contradiction, as if born to have always his own Will, always humoured and pleaſed, is greatly unprepared for Trials, and likely to fret againſt God. *Pharaoh* is not the only Man whoſe Language has been, *Who is the Lord, that I ſhould obey him?* "I own no Throne higher than my "own; nor will I receive Law from any other, "God or Man." The ſame ſays every one that diſputes the Supremacy with God, in contending whoſe Will ſhall be done.

No People have their Will leſs than thoſe who are for having it always: They draw more Troubles upon them, and feel them deeper. Generally this Temper is its own Puniſhment to a great Degree. A Root of Bitterneſs, from which a thouſand Vexations ſpring up, that would have had no Exiſtence, or would have been far leſs afflictive to thoſe who make a Sacrifice of their Will to the Will of God. Take away Self-will, and there would be no Sin, no Hell, no Kingdom of Satan. Take away Self-will, and you take away a thouſand Sorrows which it only creates to itſelf, and which

are eſcaped by the yielding Will of Reſignation *.

We promiſe ourſelves too much from this World, and from all our Relations and Conditions in it: And the higher we riſe in our Expectations and Opinions of Things, the lower we fall in the Vexations of Diſappointment. Men launch into the World in as unaccountable a Manner as we ſhould think of thoſe Seamen, who, becauſe it is fair Weather when they ſet ſail, make no Proviſion for a Storm. What Confuſion muſt they be in when the Storm comes down? We muſt not promiſe ourſelves an Exemption from thoſe Troubles that are common to all Mankind. We muſt not flatter ourſelves to attain what we have in Proſpect, or hold long what we have in Poſſeſſion.

Great Affections make way for great Afflictions, and make Submiſſion to Providence the harder. The Advice of the Apoſtle is very well ſuited to a World, *the Faſhion* or Scheme of which *paſſeth away*. This *I ſay, Brethren, the Time is ſhort: It remains, that both they who have Wives be as though they had none; and they that weep* the Loſs of them, *as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as they that poſſeſſed not; and*

* Ceſſet voluntas propria, et non erit Infernus. Civitas Diaboli incipit ab amore ſui. BERN.

If God would ſtudy a cloſe, quick, and certain Way of being revenged on a Man, he need but open his Stores, and bid him chooſe for himſelf. Mr S. FORD.

and they that uſe this World, as not abuſing it; for the Faſhion of this World paſſeth away, 1 Cor. 7. 29—31. Did not I know it was haſtning to an End? Why did I ſet my Heart upon it, as if it was more durable? Why did I make the Parting more afflictive, and the Reſignation more difficult, by the Intemperance of my Affection?

The Jews had a Cuſtom at their Wedding Feaſts, for the married Couple to drink in the ſame Glaſs together, and then to break it in Pieces; teaching them by that Emblem, that whatever Felicity they expected together, their Lives, upon which it all depended, were frail and brittle as Glaſs. No ſooner joined, but they were warned to prepare for Separation. So in our Form of Matrimony, the Clauſe, UNTIL DEATH DO US PART, is a Memento to the ſame Purpoſe.

It it as much my Duty to pray, that I may be willing and able to part with any dear Comfort of Life, in a right Manner, as to pray for its Continuance. We are apt to be moſt earneſt for their Continuance; as if it was a greater Thing for God to pleaſe us, than for us to pleaſe God. The Grace that ſays, *Thy Will be done*, is infinitely more neceſſary to me than any good Thing God can take away, to try that Grace, and ſhow me that I have it.

Mourner.— "Oh Lord, thou knoweſt how "near that Perſon lay to my Heart; but thou "knoweſt that thy Favour is neareſt ſtill. I "would not fear ſo much the loſing any Thing, "as of offending thee. Thou wilt ſurely grant "my

" my Requeſt in one of theſe two Things; either " to continue the Mercy I enjoy, or help me to " reſign it at thy Call, in the Manner thou ſhalt " approve: And then, whatever Loſs there may " be in ſuch a Removal, I am ſure the Senſe of " thine Approbation is ſuch a Gain as can ne- " ver coſt me too dear."

He that will die well muſt die daily, and practiſe upon the Foreſight of it. So he that will reſign well, and with a becoming Grace, muſt practiſe upon Reſignation, and frequently put Caſes to himſelf. What if I ſhould return Home this Evening, and find my Houſe in Flames? That fair Eſtate which is now to ſupply my Wants, and ſupport my Figure; what if it ſhould take Wings and fly away? What if the Deſire of mine Eyes ſhould be taken off with a Stroke? Or I ſhould ſee that pretty Child lie a dead Corps? That which I now lay in my Boſom, I ſhall not be able to bear in my Sight? What ſhould I then do? How ſhould I behave? Am I prepared for ſuch a Caſe? If not, I have the more Reaſon to think of it beforehand. If I am prepared for it, then I can better bear to think of it now; or elſe, how ſhall I bear the Thing itſelf, when by refuſing to think of it at all, I continue to make it more intolerable.

As hard as this Practice ſeems to be, it is much harder to be ſurprized without ever having thought of the Matter, or preparing for it. Though hard, it is deſigned to make that *eaſier*, which otherwiſe is one of the hardeſt

Things

Things in the World, and will be ſo always, the leſs it is thought of in Time.

Another Impediment to Reſignation, is a Conceit of our own *Deſervings*.

How can that Perſon ſubmit to mean Allotments of Providence, who fancies himſelf deſerving of the beſt? The Uneaſineſs with which a Man takes a low Rank in the World, is in Proportion to the Opinion of himſelf being qualified for higher Stations. Modeſty and Humility ſave a deal of Trouble here. "I "have a great deal, for one that deſerves no-"thing; nay, for one who deſerves Miſery! "Let the Lord place me where he pleaſes: "If it be out of Hell, I ſhall have Reaſon "for Praiſe and Thanks, enough to keep out "Murmuring." You cry and ſwell, complain and repine. I aſk you, Did God owe you any Thing? Is he accountable to you? Do you deſerve any Thing? Who are you? And what are you more, or better, than thoſe many, who at this Time are ſuffering for God with Faith and Patience, in the Want of all things; and think they had hardly any thing to aſk for, on this ſide Heaven, if they could but quietly ſerve God in the half of that, which can hardly make you civil to the Almighty, for want of more? To enlarge our Deſires is laying ourſelves open to needleſs Vexations, as numerous as our needleſs Deſires. He whoſe Deſires are an hundred times larger than others, is every

Day liable to ſo many hundred times more Vexations and Diſappointments.

SECT. VII.

Help againſt immoderate Grief, from ſome Conſiderations with reſpect to God, who taketh away.

IT is the Lord, 1 Sam. 3. 18. This is the Anſwer made to the heavy Meſſage brought by young *Samuel* to old *Eli*. *I will do a Thing in Iſrael*, ſays God, *at which both the Ears of every one that hears it ſhall tingle:* That he would cut off all his Family, and his Father's Houſe. *Thou ſhalt ſee an Enemy in mine Habitation; and there ſhall not be an old Man in thine Houſe for ever:* Or, *the Man of thine, whom I ſhall not cut off from mine Altar, ſhall be to conſume thine Eyes, and to grieve thine Heart. And all the Increaſe of thy Houſe ſhall die in the Flower of their Age, and thy two Sons ſhall both die in one Day*; 1 Sam. 2. 31—34. Here is the Death of Children in the Flower of their Age; Poverty extreme; Extinction of his Family; and till then, the Branches of it ſhould only live to plague the Parent: A dreadful Threatning! But he anſwers, *It is the Lord!*

His abſolute *Propriety* in us, and all that we have, is unanſwerable. *The Earth is the Lord's, and*

and the Fulneſs thereof. The Product, the Inhabitants, the Furniture of all Worlds are his. *Shall he not do what he will with his own?* If I myſelf am his Property, every thing I have muſt be ſo too.

His abſolute *Sovereignty* over all things, is uncontrollable. *Behold, he taketh away, and who can hinder him?* Job 9. 12. He *doth whatſoever he pleaſes in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth.*

His tranſcendent *Majeſty* and Excellency are not to be diſputed. *Shall not his Excellency make thee afraid to murmur againſt him, and to find fault with his Ways; and his Dread fall upon thee?* Job 13. 11.

He that ſits on the Throne of the Univerſe, who ſhakes Heaven and Earth with his Voice; who hath Power to lodge a Heaven or Hell in thy Breaſt, by his Smiles or Frowns, according as he pleaſes to reward thy Submiſſion or puniſh thy Diſcontent; who can employ Legions of Angels to be thy Guard, or Devils to be thy Tormentors; he that can ſilence thy Murmurs with Thunder, or ſtop thy inſolent Breath with Fire and Brimſtone, and horrible Tempeſt; *ſhall not his Excellency make thee afraid?* He who dwells in Light that is unapproachable, before whom Angels veil their Faces; ſhall I lift up my bold Front againſt this God, and charge that Brightneſs with a Spot, that Wiſdom with Folly, and that Juſtice of his with any Iniquity?

His infinite *Perfections*, what Language do they ſpeak? He is infinitely wiſe, and cannot err: Infinitely powerful, and cannot be reſiſted: Infinitely holy, and cannot behold Iniquity without Abhorrence: Infinitely good, and can do no Evil; likewiſe true, and cannot falſify his Word. If it were poſſible to take the univerſal Management out of his Hands into your own, it would be the beſt Way to replace it in the Hand of God again. It is he to whoſe Will all the World beſide complies, why ſhould not I? And when I read that Chriſt himſelf ſaid, *I am come to do thy Will, O God*; and, *Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt*; who am I, that I ſhould pretend to ſpeak any other Language?

Conſider the *Relation* in which he ſtands to us. My Will he made; ſhall he not give Laws to his own Creature? Did he make this Hand to ſtrike at himſelf? This Breath, this Tongue, to ſpeak againſt him; and this Will to rebel againſt himſelf? As I am a dependent Creature, *in him I live, and move, and have my Being*. As I am an expectant Creature, is it the Way to obtain my Will *of* him, to deny the Homage of my Will *to* him? As I am a ſinful Creature, have not I enough Guilt upon me already? Should I ſwell the Account, and increaſe my Miſery? As I am an accountable Creature, he is my Judge; as I am a recoverable Creature, he is my Saviour: And am I angry with any of his Methods toward making all theſe Ideas concur to my Salvation? To be redeemed from the Tyranny of

my

my own Will, and Fancy, and Appetite, is no ſmall Part of the Redemption by Jeſus Chriſt. Did he give himſelf up to Death for us; and ſhall I think it too much to give my Will up to his? Shall the Redeemed from Thraldom diſpute the Orders of the Redeemer? Shall Servants diſpute the Will of their Maſter? and Subjects ſay, to ſuch a King, *What doſt thou?* Are we his Friends upon any other Terms, than *doing whatſoever he commands us?* And if, as Children, we go to him as *our Father who is in Heaven*; muſt we not add, *Thy Will to be done?*

Whether we ſubmit to his Will or no, his Will *ſhall be done. His Counſel ſhall ſtand, and he will do all his Pleaſure.* You may as well ſubmit by Grace, and have the Comfort of ſo doing, as be forced to it without Grace, and without Comfort, whether you will or no. If it be an Act of Homage, your Submiſſion has a Reward; but if it be merely becauſe you cannot help it, you have only Sorrow for your Pains. What does all my fretting amount to? Will it change the Courſe of Providence, and allay Griefs?

Conſider how much God might have taken away beſides: He might have left me no one Comfort: He might have taken away all, as well as a Part. He might have given up my Soul to Terror, my Body to Diſeaſe, and my Affairs to Confuſion and Calamity.

It is by his *Providence* that all things are conducted; the moſt caſual, and moſt trivial. Loſs,

the moſt caſual; *Prov.* 16. 33. and a Sparrow falling to the Ground, or a Hair, the moſt trivial Things.

If there was no Providence, we ſhould want one of the beſt Antidotes againſt the Fear of what is to come, and the Sorrow for what is paſt; for, as Biſhop *Patrick* obſerves, all the Care would then lie upon ourſelves, and be too much for us. But when we think of infinite Wiſdom and Power governing all things, one need not be at a Plight, as if we and Chance were to govern the World. Some have ſatisfied themſelves with the Thought, that it is in vain to be troubled, ſince things muſt be as they will be; but this is cold Comfort, to be content on mere Neceſſity, though it is the Main of what the Heathen Comforters afforded. Thanks be to God, we have ſomething better. That the World is not governed merely by the Will of God, but alſo by his Wiſdom and Goodneſs. And he diſpoſes of all things, not only as abſolute Lord, that we may be ſenſible of his Power, but as a loving Father, that we ſhould be ſenſible of his Goodneſs. It is a Diſtruſt of God to be over-troubled at what is to come: It is Impatience to fret at what is preſent, and Anger againſt him to be over concerned about what is paſt. This Frame of Spirit finds fault with his Wiſdom, and blames his Goodneſs; depreſſes his Power, and reprehends his Faithfulneſs in the Diſpoſal of Things; and therefore it is a ſinful Frame, and ſpeedily *to be amended.*

The

The wife and great Ends he is advancing to his own Glory, and my Good, is another Conſideration. God hath as much Right to uſe me to the Purpoſes of his own Glory, whether perceived by me or not, as I have to the Uſe of any Inſtrument in my Houſe, or of any Servant, without acquainting him with my Purpoſes. Thus in the Caſes of *Abraham*, *Joſeph*, and *Job*: Had they not been uſed by God much otherwiſe than their natural Will inclined them to chooſe, we had loſt the Benefit of the fineſt Inſtances of Submiſſion in the World*. *O Lord! We are thy Clay, and thou the Potter. We are all the Work of thy Hands*, Iſa. 64. 8. *Cannot I do with you as the Potter, ſaith the Lord? Behold, as the Clay is in the Potter's Hand, ſo are ye in my Hand*, Jer. 18. 6.

Whatever you loſe or part with, you cannot be miſerable while you have this Lord to be your God and Portion; the God who made the Creatures we are ſo fond of, and gave them all that Lovelineſs which made us ſo fond of them; and has in himſelf all that which he gave, and infinitely more. How does it ſound to ſay, "I am undone, for I have nothing but God "left?" Surely God can ſupply the Room of any departed Creature, though the whole World cannot fill up the Room of a departed God. To loſe a Creature, and find a God, has been an

* *I ſee God will have all my Heart, and he ſhall have it*; was a fine Reflection made by a Lady, when News was brought of two Children drowned, whom ſhe loved very much.

an happy Exchange to ſome, whoſe Loſſes have brought them to know God and themſelves, to much better Purpoſe than ever.

He that takes away, will give *more Grace* in Time of Need; and of *his Strength* to bear any Burden, however diſproportioned to our *own*. *He giveth more Grace*, and more ſtill, as the Caſe requires: For *God is Faithful, who will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but with the Temptation will alſo find a Way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.* Eſcape *by* bearing, though not *from* bearing. He is ſuppoſed to eſcape well, who is made *able to bear*.

Submiſſion to his Will is one of the beſt Ways of glorifying God, and the moſt acceptable Sacrifice we can make. It ſuppoſes you will diſpute nothing with him, after having ſurrendered your own Will to the Will of God. Martyrdom itſelf is but the Conſequence of that Diſpoſition, and will be ſure to follow, when God calls this Grace to act its Part that Way. The ſame Grace that enables us to ſuffer *from him*, will help us to ſuffer *for* him.

To ſacrifice a Will to God, is that *reaſonable Service and living Sacrifice, which is holy and acceptable:* As much beyond the Sacrifices of *Aaron*, as the Soul and Spirit of an obedient Chriſtian are beyond the dead Carcaſs of a Beaſt. Turn Mountains into Altars, and offer upon thoſe Altars the Cattle of a thouſand Hills: Pour out ten thouſand Rivers of Oil for a Drink-offering, it would never be accepted inſtead of that

that Demand, *My Son, give me thine Heart, and let thine Eyes obſerve my Ways* *.

Without this Surrender of Soul, he calls all the outward Practices of Religion but *Flattery with the Lips:* and with very good Reaſon; for Men count themſelves flattered, when our Behaviour is not at all agreeable to the fine things we ſay to them. So are we accounted to flatter God, when we aſcribe to him thoſe Perfections, and give him thoſe Titles, which, when it comes to the Point of Trial, we ſeem to unſay again. We call him the Moſt High God, but by and by ſomething elſe appears higher in our Eſteem and Regard: That Huſband, that Child, that Wife, or that Eſtate, or Honour. We call him Moſt Glorious, and yet glory more in ſomething elſe. You may compliment him with the Title of Faithful and True; but while he ſees that you will not truſt him in the Way of your Duty, that you will not take his Word in a Promiſe, for a Work of Piety to God, or Charity to Man, he counts himſelf flattered. If you call him *Lord, Lord*, and yet *do not the Things that he ſays*; if you call him *your God* and *Portion*, and yet, upon the taking away of what was apparently more dear to you, your Outrage of Complaint ſpeaks that Language;

Ye

* *The* Chaldee *Paraphraſe upon* Pſal. 50. 23. Whoſo offereth Praiſe, glorifieth God: And to him that orders his Converſation aright, will I ſhew the Salvation of God; *i.* "Whoſo ſubdues and deſtroys the Principle of inordinate "Affection, it ſhall be accounted to him for a Sacrifice of "Praiſe."

Ye have taken away my Gods, and what have I more? However it may appear to Men, what God thinks of it all, he has told you in thoſe Words; *They remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer: Nevertheleſs, they did flatter him with their Mouth, and they lied unto him with their Tongues*; Pſal. 78. 35, 36. He ſaw it to be all Flattery and Lies.

Do you ſee, ſays God, how that Perſon behaves in the Offices of Devotion? Can any body be more aſſiduous in Reading, Prayer, Hearing, and Sacraments? You ſhall now ſee what all this is good for, and of how little Worth. God puts forth his Hand accordingly, and takes away the Delight of his Eyes with a Stroke; when preſently, the God that he ſeemed to adore with ſo much Reſignation can hardly have a good Word, or a good Thought; can hardly be allowed to be wiſe, or good and juſt, or any thing, but a very ſevere and hard Maſter. He not only mourns, but he pines, and conſumes; he rages againſt me; I, and my Heaven, now are Cyphers, in Compariſon of the Creature that I have done no Harm to, but only removed, for Purpoſes he himſelf will rejoice at when he comes to know them.

In ſhort, this Subminiſſion is the Sum and Subſtance of Religion, and the Beauty of Chriſtianity. Upon entering the School of Chriſt, this is the firſt Leſſon propoſed to be learned, to *take up his Croſs and follow him:* And all that we do or ſuffer in Religion afterward, is either expreſſive

expreſſive of this, or inſtrumental towards it. If we pray, it is that his *Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven.* If we read, it is that we may know *what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect Will of God*; to learn Moderation in proſperous Joy, Calmneſs in Troubles, Compoſure of Mind, with a decent Vent of Sorrow in every Diſtreſs.

SECT. VIII.

Help againſt immoderate Grief, with reſpect to the Perſons departed.

HAD not God a Property in them as well as you, prior to yours, and ſuperior? They were his, before they were yours: They are his, now they are no longer yours; by a thouſand Obligations, Ties, and Relations, that ought to take Place of all our Claims and Pretenſions.

Should they have been immortal here, only to pleaſe you? to have lived, though weary of it; to have ſtaid, though longing to be gone; and in Miſery, though fit for Happineſs? Should they be kept in the Troubles of Life, in the Pains of Sickneſs, and the Infirmities of Age; or at beſt, in the inſipid Repetition of the ſame Round of Things, only to prevent a Vacancy in any of your Amuſements or Delights? *Is this thy Kindneſs to thy Friend?*

Some

Some parting Time muſt come, why not this? If the Time of parting with them was left to our Choice, it would greatly increaſe our Confuſion.

They are not extinct and gone out of Being. Their Manner of Exiſtence is changed, but the Exiſtence itſelf is not loſt. *They that are fallen aſleep in Chriſt, are not periſhed*; 1 Cor. 15. 18. They are not blotted out of Being, nor out of Life, upon our Chriſtian Scheme.

The Degree of Happineſs in their preſent State of Separation, whatever it is, affords a comfortable Thought. If they are abſent from you, and from their own Bodies, they are *preſent with the Lord*; which, I ſuppoſe, you will allow to be *far better*. So much better indeed, that for the Sake of entring into it, it is worth a good Man's while to die at any Time, and leave any Company upon Earth, though ever ſo pleaſant or good.

The Spirit, that returns to God who gave it, is received by God, and welcomed in a Manner ſuitable to the Relation and Character in which it arrives there. *Bleſſed are the Dead that die in the Lord, for they reſt from their Labours.* They could have little or no Reſt here, what with Labour and Trouble, Temptation and Sin. What a vaſt Improvement in Knowledge muſt a diſincumbred Soul make in ſuch a Situation? *Now we ſee darkly, as through a Glaſs; but then Face to Face.* If the Pleaſure be not ſo complete as after the Reſurrection, it muſt however be unſpeakable, beyond all that

that this World affords. They are ſure of their own Salvation, and of being the Heirs of Glory. And if the Pleaſure of Aſſurance here be ſo tranſporting, as to give ſometimes a *Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*; while we ſay with the Apoſtle, *we know and have believed the Love which God hath towards us*; what will it be for a Soul to find itſelf ſafely landed in the World of Perfection? among Spirits of juſt Men made perfect; freed from all Imperfections, natural and ſinful; returned to their native Soil, having left that foreign Country where they were *Pilgrims and Strangers*, and got home to their Father's Houſe, *where there are many Manſions?* In the beſt Society and Company, as well as the beſt Place? Reviewing paſt Dangers and Labours? Admiring the Wiſdom of God, and his Goodneſs that has brought them thither; and eſpecially the Goodneſs of that Stroke we are mourning over here? Their Worſhip muſt needs be ſpiritual, who are all Spirit; without Wearineſs, Failure, or Interruption. They have glorious Scenes at preſent before them, and pleaſing Expectations of great and more glorious Things: Such as the accompliſhing the Number of the Elect, and all that ſhall be ſaved; the fulfilling the great Periods of Prophecy that remain; the Downfal of Antichriſt; the glorious Appearance of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; the Reſurrection of the Body; the Abolition of Death, and the ſolemn Coronation of all the

Conquerors through *the Blood of the Lamb*, to a Kingdom that can never be ſhaken.

Is this a Condition to be lamented with inceſſant Tears? Is it for People who are in ſuch a Caſe as this, that we go up and down in Black, with downcaſt Looks, and weeping Eyes! What one Article of this Happineſs aforeſaid is not worth more than the longeſt Life of Pleaſure and Honour in the World? One would think that theſe things only wanted to be believed and thought on. Would we fetch them back from this Condition if we could? I am afraid we are ſo ſelfiſh, that if the Reſurrection Power were lodged in our Hands for one Day, we ſhould immediately run to the Graves of our dear departed, and fetch them back again. To ſtop our own Sorrows for a while, we ſhould begin theirs afreſh, and bring them back to Miſery. They no ſooner enter Heaven, but they wiſh they had been ſooner there. And the next Wiſh is, that we may be with them too as ſoon as may be; and yet we wiſh a quite contrary Way.

I think of the happy Meeting again, which all the World ſhall not be able to hinder after a few Days are paſt. Let us not behave as if we were never to meet again. Do not mourn *as without Hope*. Our Religion teacheth us to believe, that in the ſeparate State we ſhall not be without the Society of our departed godly Relations and Friends. The ſeparate Soul of the Beggar, *Lazarus*, is repreſented as in

in the Company, nay, in the Boſom of his Father *Abraham*; and the penitent Thief was promiſed to be with Chriſt in Paradiſe. The Spirits of juſt Men are not perfected in order to be an Aſſembly of Mutes: Nor is it likely they ſhould be Strangers to one another, when Converſation in this imperfect World produces Acquaintance and ſocial Endearment.

There will indeed be different Ranks and Orders of Saints; different Degrees of Reward there, as of Holineſs here, and conſequently of Apartments and Situations. But is it not the ſame in this World? Is every one in the ſame Rank and Station; of the ſame Character, or Title and Endowments? And yet we know one another, and converſe together; a great deal of the Beauty and Pleaſure of Society ariſing from this Variety, as it will alſo there.

At the Reſurrection you ſhall meet again in your glorified Bodies, as well as perfect Spirits. For, *all that ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him*; and will *change their vile Bodies, and make them like to his own glorious Body. It was ſown a natural Body; it ſhall be raiſed a ſpiritual Body*, freed from all elementary Droſs; will feel no Pain, can need no Food; will never be weary, however exerciſed or employed; without any Appetites that tend to Inordinacy. Our Bodies then will be immortal. *The Children of the Reſurrection die no more.* Incorruptible; *ſown in Corruption, it is raiſed in*

Incorruption. You will meet them with all theſe Improvements, and to all theſe Degrees far more delightful than ever.

God will bring them with him as part of his glorious Train; when Chriſt ſhall *be glorified in all his Saints, and admired in all that believe*; as the Trophies of all his Conqueſts, the Veſſels of his Grace, the Members of his Body, the Spouſe of his Love, the ſhining Inſtances of his Faithfulneſs and Power, the Aſſeſſors of his Court of Judgment, and Partakers of his Glory.

How joyful will that Meeting be? How happy? How glorious? Never to part more! You were not always together here; but you ſhall be always together after that Meeting. The parting Kiſs, the Word *Farewel*, have no more room for ever. This Meeting together again, is what Chriſt purchaſed: *For to this End Chriſt died and roſe again, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and the Living*; Rom. 14. 9. This Meeting together again is what the Word of God has promiſed: *For, this we ſay unto you, by the Word of the Lord, that we ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air; and ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.* 1 Theſſ. 4. 15.

This is what the great God hath promiſed, and is very well able to perform. *He is able to keep you from falling, and to preſent you faultleſs before the Preſence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy*, Jude 24, 25. And *they that ſleep in Jeſus*,

Jeſus, will God bring with him; 1 Theſſ. 4. 14. The Return of Chriſt, and of thoſe who ſleep in him, have the ſame Grounds of Credibility. *If we believe that Chriſt died and roſe again*, then if you believe one you may believe the other: Nay, you muſt and ought to believe the other, upon the Credit of the ſame Evidence and Authority. *For if there be no Reſurrection of the Dead, then is not Chriſt riſen*, 1 Cor. 15. 13. This general Meeting is deſigned for general Satisfaction. John 14. 20. *At that Day ye ſhall know.* God the Father will ſee, with Satisfaction, the Work of his Hands in Perfection, made fit to receive the Communication of his Endearments. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt *will ſee the Travail of his Soul, and be ſatisfied* in the full Accompliſhment of his Deſign, in their complete Felicity. The Holy Spirit will ſee, with Satisfaction, the final Succeſs of his Operations, in our perfect Holineſs and Happineſs. Angels will be pleaſed, to ſee the Succeſs of their Miniſtrations; and gladly welcome us, the Partners of their Joys. And as to ourſelves, what an inexpreſſible Reciprocation of endearing Love, and multiplied Joy, to find ourſelves all met together after our parting Sorrows? When all Things and Perſons, any way offenſive, ſhall be gathered out and thrown aſide. No Falſehood, Rancour, Partiality, Miſtake, Prejudice, Infirmity, Paſſion, or Pride, ſhall be met with there; not any thing to hinder the hea-

'No ſtrange Thing has befallen me; nothing but what is common to Men. 'Tis no more ſtrange that a Man ſhould die, than that he ſhould be born. Am I better than my Fathers, who are dead and gone? *Whom makeſt thou thyſelf?* Where's the Senſe and Reaſon of pretending to an Exemption from the common Lot of Mankind? *Beloved, think it not ſtrange, as if ſome ſtrange thing had happened unto you,* 1 Pet. 4. 12. for this is no ſtrange thing, that a Mortal ſhould die.

I come into a Family, and ſee one in a Corner weeping and ſighing; another is fallen upon a Couch, unable to hold up the Head; another is run up to a Chamber, like *David*, to weep and cry out, *Oh Abſalom; my Son, my Son.* What is the Matter? Why, one that was born to die, is dead! Was it the firſt Child, or Huſband, that ever died? No. Had you a Patent from Heaven againſt the common Lot? No. Would you have had God made him immortal to pleaſe you? *He teareth himſelf in his Anger. Shall the Rock be removed out of its Place for you?* Job 18. 4.

How many Mercies and Comforts are continued to thee, that might alſo have been taken away? and how many Troubles prevented, that might have befallen you? You have loſt ſome Children; it might have been all. You have loſt all; it might have been your Huſband too, or Wife, at the ſame Time. You have loſt Huſband, or Wife; it might

might have been alſo Eſtate, and all the Means of Subſiſtance. Or ſuppoſe that's gone too; you have Liberty, Health, Peace, and Friends. Or ſuppoſe they are alſo gone; you are out of Hell, and within reach of Heaven: which, I will ſay, is a greater thing than any you have loſt, or all theſe put together. Pardon of Sin, and Peace with God, may ſtill be yours.

Mourner. Theſe, I fear, are not mine.

Anſwer. Nay, then it is Time to mourn over ſomething elſe than a dead Friend. To mourn over a dead Soul of your own, to mourn over a loſt God, to ſorrow for Sin; theſe are infinitely more to your Purpoſe than ſorrowing for the Dead. And there is at leaſt this room to rejoice, that all theſe ſpiritual Bleſſings *may be had.* You may be pardoned, accepted, ſanctified, and ſaved. And it is a Matter of great Comfort that theſe things are poſſible, and within reach.

Mourner. But I would have had theſe ſpiritual Bleſſings, with the Life and Enjoyment alſo of thoſe that are gone.

Anſwer. That is, you would have every thing according to your Deſire and Fancy; that God and Providence ſhould take their Orders from you, and conſult your Liking, before they execute their Decrees. But, *ſhould it be according to thy Mind!* Job 34. 33. He that has a Pillow to lay his Head upon, and yet (as one ſays) will needs lay it upon a Stone; he that has many convenient Seats to ſit upon,

and

and nothing will ſerve him but a Buſh of Thorns; ſurely they muſt be very much in love with Sorrow and Melancholy, who enjoy ſo many Bleſſings, and will yet ſlight all the Pleaſures of them, to pine away in the Company of their Wants. Underſtand what you now poſſeſs, as you would do if it were taken away, and then you will have a better Reliſh for it.

The Miſeries and Troubles entailed on the Poſterity of *Adam*, are numerous. They are compared to the Sparks that fly up, for Number. It is a Mercy we eſcape any of them: That all theſe Sparks do not kindle upon us together: That all theſe Troubles do not ſeize upon us at once: That out of ſo many Miſeries we ſhould have ſo few, when we are born to all, by Deſcent; ſubject to all, by Nature; deſerving of all, by Sin.

Do you forget what your Sins deſerve? *Shall a living Man complain; a Man for the Puniſhment of his Sin?* Lam. 3. 39. *A living Man*, when you might have been dead; *for the Puniſhment of Sin*, and you might have been damned? The Puniſhment of Sin, on this Side of Hell, is always leſs than our Iniquities deſerve.

Mourner. *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him.*

Anſwer. "Let every Man, ſays one, when "he computes what he wants of his Deſires, "reckon as exactly how far he is ſhort in his "Duty;

" Duty; and when he has duly pondered both, " he will think it a very eaſy Compoſition, " though his Wants ſhould be unſupplied, pro- " vided his Sins be pardoned; and will ſee " Cauſe to ſit down contentedly with honeſt " *Mephiboſheth*, 2 Sam. 19. 23. *What Right* " *have I yet to cry any more to the King?*"

The Good of Affliction in general ought to be taken into the Account, as another Conſideration to aſſwage our Griefs. *He for our Profit* chaſtiſes; ſays the Apoſtle; and *it was good for me that I was afflicted*, ſays *David*.

Afflictions have a Tendency to awaken our Repentance; to ſtir us up to *ſearch and try our Ways, in order to turn our Feet unto God's Teſtimonies. I will go and return to my Place, till they acknowlege their Offence. In their Affliction they will ſeek me early*, Hoſ. 5. 15. And ſo it proved, *ver.* 16. *Come, let us turn to the Lord: He hath torn us, and he will heal; he hath broken us, and he will bind us up.* They help to wean us from this World, and make us more willing to depart. As we muſt needs be leſs fond of the World, the more troubleſome it is to us; and as it makes our Dying the more eaſy and more welcome, to have ſent thoſe before us for whoſe Sake we might deſire to live, and with whom we deſire to be. We have fewer Ties and Engagements to Earth. The Fibres being cut off, and the Roots looſened, the Tree falls with greater Eaſe.

Afflictions bring us to Thoughtfulneſs and Conſideration, when all other Means in the World can hardly do it. A Man that can ſit at a Sermon as unmoved as if the Joys of Heaven, the Sorrows of Hell, and the Eternity of both were no Part of his Concern: The Excellency of God, the Vanity of the World, the Deformity of Sin, and the Beauty of Holineſs, ſhall leave him unmoved, if not aſleep; he little regards the Meſſage, or the Meſſenger: But let God ſend one of *Job*'s Meſſengers to tell him ſuch a Ship is loſt, his Houſe is burnt, or ſuch a dear Relation dead; preſently he is awake, and has more Thoughts of Heart in an Hour, than he had before in a Month.

The patient Bearing of ſuch Afflictions, and the ſanctified Improvement of them, is one Mark of our Sonſhip, and the Love of God to us. Should you loſe the Comfort of ſuch an Evidence by Impatience? *Heb.* 12. 7. *If ye endure Chaſtening, he dealeth with you as with Sons. To endure*, ſeems to ſignify more than merely to be chaſtiſed; namely, to accept the Chaſtiſement as from the Hand of God, and to bear it with becoming Decency and Patience. There is one Remark more, proper for ſome Mourners, from theſe Words: *If ye endure chaſtening, he dealeth with you as with Sons.* What a Miſtake is it then to ſay, "If I was a Child of God, he would not deal "with me in ſuch a Manner;" when the Text ſays,

ſays, *If ye endure chaſtening, he dealeth with you as with Sons?*

Affliction well ſuſtained improves every Part of our Religion. It teaches Compaſſion and Sympathy towards others in their Troubles. It gives an Edge to our Devotion, an Ardency to our Prayers, Tenderneſs to our Heart, and a Life to our Graces: It is the Trial and Triumph of our Faith. Patience hath its perfect Work: Our Reſolutions for God are confirmed; ſo that we take faſter Hold of God, and of thoſe Things that cannot be taken from us.

Our Sorrows, at longeſt, are but ſhort; and we ſhall ſhortly ourſelves go the ſame Way. How diminutively does the Apoſtle ſpeak of the Afflictions of this preſent Time? *Our light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. You call them *heavy*, he calls them *light*; and thoſe light Afflictions but *for a Moment*; and that Moment of light Afflictions *worketh for us*. You are apt to think they all work *againſt* you, but they work *for* you *a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*. The Contraſt lies betwe.n *Affliction* and *Glory*; *light* Affliction, and the *Weight* of Glory; light Affliction for a *Moment*, and a Weight of Glory *eternal*: Spoken as much like an Orator, as like an Apoſtle. And who was it that ſaid all this? One that knew as well what Affliction was, one that had as much of it to his Share, as any Man in the World. *In Labours more*

abundant; in Stripes above Meaſure; in Priſons more frequent; in Deaths often. Of the Jews five Times received I forty Stripes, ſave one: Thrice was I beaten with Rods; once ſtoned; thrice ſuffered Shipwreck; a Night and a Day was I in the Deep. In Journeying often; in Perils of Waters; in Perils of Robbers; in Perils by mine own Countrymen; in Perils by the Heathen; in Perils in the City; in Perils in the Wilderneſs; in Perils in the Sea; in Perils among falſe Brethren: In Wearineſs and Painfulneſs; in Watchings often; in Hunger and Thirſt; in Faſting often; in Cold and Nakedneſs; beſides the Care of all the Churches; 2 Cor. 11. and yet, *light Afflictions!*

The Time is ſhort: It remains, that they that weep, ſhould be as if they wept not; 1 Cor. 7. *The End of all Things is at hand.* I ſhall ſhortly know myſelf what it is to change Worlds. 'Tis more to the Purpoſe to prepare for my own Death, than fruitleſly to lament that of another. And to make ſure of meeting my godly Friends, is more now my Buſineſs, than to loſe Time in bewailing their Parting. *Eſtabliſh your Hearts, for the Coming of the Lord draws nigh*; James 1. 2.

It will be a double Loſs to loſe the dear Relations, and to loſe the Benefit of the Affliction too: It is enough to have loſt *them*. Shall I loſe the ſpiritual Advantage that might be gained by ſuch a Trial, and into which it might be improved?

Patient

Patient Submiſſion gives the ſureſt Poſſeſſion of ourſelves, and the beſt Enjoyment of every thing elſe. *In Patience we poſſeſs our Souls*; Luke 21. 19. Without it, we have loſt Poſſeſſion of ourſelves: And he that does not enjoy himſelf, can enjoy nothing elſe; for whatever is poured into a tainted Veſſel is all ſpoiled.

It is a dangerous thing to provoke God by obſtinate Grief, *leſt a worſe thing come unto us.* For he has ſaid, *With the Froward, I will ſhew myſelf froward*, Pſal. 18. 26. *He that hath a froward Heart findeth no Good*, Prov. 17. 20. *Thorns and Briers are in the Way of the Froward. He that keeps his Soul* (quiet and ſubmiſſive) *ſhall be free from them*, Prov. 22. 5. And after this, *Do I well to be angry?* Would any one chooſe to walk upon Thorns and Briers, that could pick out an eaſier Path? Where one Tear falls upon the Account of complying with God's Will, a Multitude fall in conſequence of having our own Will. Not only the Miſeries of this Life, but the eternal Miſeries of the Life to come, are owing to this unreſigned Self-will. It may be written on many a Tomb, HERE LIES THE BODY OF N. N. BECAUSE HE WOULD HAVE HIS OWN WILL.

SECT. X.

Help againſt immoderate Grief, from Conſiderations with reſpect to others, and the World about us.

COMPARE your Caſe with that of others, and you may eaſily obſerve more miſerable and mournful ones. There are a thouſand Perſons with whom you would not change Conditions. By what Law is it, that you muſt only gaze at thoſe above you, and take no Notice of thoſe below? That you muſt look on him only who is carried on Mens Shoulders, and think it a fine thing to be ſo mounted, but never conſider the poor Men that carry him, whoſe Place you would by no means accept of. "You look with a greedy Eye "upon ſuch a one's Wealth, ſays Biſhop *Pa-* "*trick*, would you have it with his Cares and "Fears, his Conſcience and Mind? His Ig- "norance; perhaps his Folly and Vices? His "ill Taſte of Things, and Incapacity of In- "tellectual Pleaſures? His uncomfortable "Proſpects?"

Mourner. No! I would be myſelf what I am, with the Addition of what I want.

Anſwer. Are you ſure of continuing what you are with that Addition? Since no one can have all Things, is not yours a good Lot? What Pretences have you, for every good Thing

Thing to center in yourſelf? Was it always well with you as it is now? Formerly you had no Being: Formerly you had none of thoſe Relations or Poſſeſſions you now lament. You have loſt that which ſome never had. Can you ſay, you had rather never to have had them than to loſe them? If it was a good Thing, the having it for a Time was a greater Good than not to have had it at all.

Compare yourſelf with the miſerable Sorrows and Sufferings of others. You will find ſuch a one has loſt her pretty Children; and at the ſame time a loving Huſband, that was better to her than ten Sons. Another has loſt a near Relation, and with that near Relation away went the Means of Subſiſtance. The Sons of *Zedekiah* were ſlain before his Face; and then his own Eyes were put out, and he himſelf led into Captivity; 2 *Kings* 25. *David* had the Mortification of a beloved Son dying in actual Rebellion againſt his Father, his Prince, and againſt his God. How much more terrible was that, than to cloſe his Eyes in a peaceful Way? The Mother of the *Maccabees* ſaw her ſeven Sons tormented to death before her Face, and ſhe afterwards herſelf underwent the ſame. The Sufferings of the Primitive Chriſtians, how grievous! The patient Reſignation of our *Engliſh* Martyrs to be burnt, how remarkable, how affecting, how glorious! If Mankind were to bring together all their ſeveral Troubles and Calamities, in all their Cir-

cumſtances of good and bad that attended them, and lay them in one common Heap, on this Condition, that when they had ſo done, every Man was to come again to take up an equal Portion of the Miſeries of Life, and divide them equally, a great many who now complain would gladly take up what they brought, and go away contented.

What if the great God deſigns that others who look on, ſhould have the Benefit of my Example and good Behaviour under ſuch a Trial as this. Hath he not a Right to uſe me for ſuch a Purpoſe? And does it not become me to comport with it, and behave accordingly? *Job* loſt his Children, his Eſtate, his Health, and in ſome meaſure, his Reputation with his Friends; his Eaſe and Peace; and all this to ſhew the World a Pattern of Patience: Shall others have no Benefit from the Example of our Behaviour? Though God can never want a Cauſe of inflicting Evil where Sin is; yet this ſhews, that Sin is not always the Cauſe. *Haſt thou conſidered my Servant Job*, ſays God to Satan, *that there is none like him in the Earth, although thou movedſt me againſt him, to deſtroy him without a Cauſe*, Job 2. 3.

This Reſignation is the moſt diſtinguiſhing Character of a Chriſtian; that which does moſt undoubtedly diſtinguiſh good Men from bad. The Externals of Religion cannot do it, becauſe they are common to the Hypocrite and the Sincere. The Hypocrite can hear and read, ſing Pſalms

Pſalms and pray, and receive Sacraments as the true Chriſtian does, and adminiſter them too, and preach; but to give up the Will to God at his Diſpoſal, and obey his Will, is what no Hypocrite can do, and continue ſuch: For it is the Eſſence of Hypocriſy to pretend only to let God have our Will, and yet reſolve to have our own. And it is the Evidence of Sincerity, to be thankful if God will let us have our own Will; but contented with his, and ſubmiſſive to it. All other Parts of Religion, I ſay, lie in common. If you hear Sermons ever ſo attentively, the Hypocrite will ſit as demurely: *They ſit before me as my People ſit.* Herod *heard* John *gladly, and did many things.* If you pray fervently and frequently, the Hypocrite may be as frequent, long, and copious. The *Phariſees, for a Pretence, made long Prayers.* You cannot come to the Sacrament oftener, nor behave with more Devotion than they do. *Judas* ſat down with the Twelve. If you entertain good Diſcourſe with great Readineſs in the Scripture Language, the Hypocrite can do the ſame. Men may preach to others, and be caſt away themſelves; may be Companions to good Men, as *Demas* was to *Paul*, and yet be *Lovers of this preſent World*, ſo as to forſake the Diſciples for it. Men may be any thing, and do any thing ſhort of this reſigned Will to God, and yet be no Chriſtians. But the Surrender of our Will to God, is a Sacrifice of that Sort, which demonſtrates him that makes it to be a Chriſtian indeed.

The Children of Wrath are deſcribed from their not having reſigned their Will to God; *Fulfilling the Deſires of the Fleſh, and of the Mind*, Eph. 2. 3. that is, their own Wills, and not God's; their own Wills, in Oppoſition to God's. And, *They have altogether broken the Yoke, and burſt the Bonds*, Jer. 5. 5. *Let us caſt away his Cords from us, and break his Bonds in ſunder*, Pſal. 2. The Children of God, on the contrary, are deſcribed from the entire Surrender of their Will to God. *As obedient Children, not faſhioning yourſelves according to your former Luſts*, not acting merely according to your own Will; *But, as he who hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of Converſation. David* was a Man *after God's own Heart, and ſerved his Generation according to the Will of God*; while others are deſcribed as *walking after their own Imagination and Luſt*, Jer. 23. 17.

The Devil will let you have as much Religion as you pleaſe, without this; becauſe he knows all Religion, that leaves the Will of Man unreſigned to God, will never reſcue the Soul out of his Hands.

Immoderate Paſſion, for loſing or gaining any thing in this World, is a Reproach to Religion, to good Principles, and the beſt Proſpects in the World. As if theſe were not ſufficient to bear us up, and to bear us out; or to make an ample Amends for the Loſs of any Comfort. As if God with all his Perfections, and Heaven with all its Glories were nothing:

No:

No; nothing to that Child, that Husband, that Wife, that Estate. I have seen a Grief so stubborn and savage as to prove insensible to all the Principles and Prospects that could be mentioned.

In such Cases we fall short of many excellent Heathens. We are outdone by those with whom we are ashamed to be compared, considering all things. Some of them had noble Sentiments under the Loss of Estates, Relations or Friends. *Zeno* lost all in a Shipwreck: He protested it was the best Voyage he ever made in his Life, because it proved the Occasion of betaking himself to the Study of Virtue and Philosophy. *Seneca* says, he enjoyed his Relations as one that was to lose them; and lost them as one who had them still in Possession. A *Spartan* Woman had five Sons in the Army, on the Day of Battle. When a Soldier came running from Camp to the City to bring Tidings, she, waiting at the Gate to hear his Report, asked, *What News?* Says the Messenger, *Thy five Sons are slain. You Fool*, says she, *I did not ask after them. How goes it in the Field of Battle? Why*, says the Messenger, *we have gained the Victory*; Sparta *is safe. Then let us be thankful*, says she, *to the Gods for our Deliverance and continued Freedom!*

Seneca speaks to God in such Language as this; "I only want to know your Will: As "soon as I know what that is, I am always of "the same Mind. I do not say you have taken

"from

" from me; that looks as if I were unwilling;
" but that you have accepted from me, which
" I am ready to offer *."

SECT. XI.

Directions.

LAY the Foundation of your Conſolation right, namely in true Converſion, a State of Grace, the Pardon of Sin, and the Favour of God. Lay the Foundation of it within you, and not on Things without; above, and not on Things below; on Chriſt, and not on ourſelves; in the Principles and Proſpects of Religion, and not on the Things of this World; in the Rectification of your Opinions, in the Government of your Appetites and Paſſions, and in poſſeſſing your Souls in Patience: Without this, you have ſomething elſe to cry for than a loſt Friend. You have a loſt Soul to bewail, of

* SENECA *abounds with noble Sentiments of this kind. He is the great Soul,* ſays that Philiſopher, *who gives himſelf at once to God: 'Tis little and mean to diſpute it.* Magnus eſt animus qui ſe Deo tradidit: Puſillus et degener qui obluctatur. *Epiſt.* 107.

Accipere potuiſtis; ſed ne nunc quidem auferetis, quia nihil eripitur niſi retinenti. Nihil cogor, nihil patior invitus: nec ſervio Deo, ſed aſſentio. *De Provid.*

Permittes ipſis expendere Numinibus quid
Conveniat nobis, rebuſque ſit utile noſtris.
Nam pro jucundis aptiſſima quæque dabunt Dii;
Carior eſt illis homo quàm ſibi. —— Juv. *Sat.* 10.

of infinitely more Concern to you than any Thing, or any Perſon in the World.

If my Comforts depend only on Things without me, they lie at the Mercy of ſo many Accidents, that it muſt needs be very precarious. But if I can ſay, "I am at Peace with God; *I* "*have a Conſcience void of Offence toward God* "*and Man*; I have a good Hope through Grace, "as to another World, and my Heart does not "condemn me;" the Accidents of Life cannot utterly ruin the Peace of ſuch a Soul. This is that Peace of which Chriſt ſays, *My Peace I leave with you; my Peace I give unto you: Not as the World gives, give I unto you. Let not your Heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.*

The Man who lays the Foundation of his Peace and Quiet in Eſtate, Relations, Health, Pleaſures of Life, or Life itſelf; when any of theſe is in danger, his Peace is ſhaken or deſtroyed; whereas, the Man is immoveable who can think and ſay thus:

"I am ſick, but not afraid tō die: It is he "who is ſick and fears to die, whoſe Peace is "deſtroyed by Sickneſs. I am in Pain, it is true; "but I have Patience to poſſeſs my Soul: It is "he who is in Pain, and has no Patience, whoſe "Comfort is deſtroyed. I am ſlighted, and diſ-"regarded; perhaps for want of Merit: If I am "conſcious of my deſerving better, let that be "my Conſolation, without eſtimating my Com-"fort and Peace by the Opinion of others. I am "leſſened in Eſtate, and reduced to narrow Cir-

"cumſtances,

" cumſtances; true, but I am not covetous:
" Had I been covetous of much, all my Com-
" fort and Peace would have gone with my
" Subſtance. But I plainly ſee the Comfort of
" Life does not lie ſo much in the Abundance of
" theſe Things, as in the Art of enjoying a little.
" I have loſt indeed a dear Friend, and a love-
" ly Creature; but my Happineſs was more
" wrapt up in that God to whom that beloved
" Perſon is gone: God will bring them along
" with him. That which beautified their Cha-
" racter, and made them ſo lovely, was what
" could not be loſt, but is perfected by the
" Tranſlation. I love them ſtill, and take a
" Pleaſure in loving them, which relieves the
" Sorrow for their Abſence. The Man who
" does not fear Death ſo much as an ill Life; who
" thinks Impatience a worſe Diſeaſe than Gout
" or Stone; who thinks Pride a greater Re-
" proach than being ſlighted; Covetouſneſs a
" viler Thing than Poverty; and that to offend
" God with immoderate Grief, is worſe than
" any Loſs whatſoever: That Man's Comfort
" and Peace is not precarious; does not lie at the
" Mercy of other Men's Fancies and Paſſions;
" and is above the Reach of Accidents."

He knows not the World nor himſelf, who depends upon Life, ſuch as ours; who is diſtracted at a croſs Accident, as if he was privileged from the common Lot, and ſome ſtrange Thing had happened to him. Did you never before imagine, that the Perſon you are now la-

lamenting for was a Mortal, as well as yourſelf? That what was born muſt die? That what has befallen others, might happen to you? That what owes its Value only to Fancy, has only a fanciful Worth? And what can be bought with Money here on Earth, is not more excellent, nor leſs periſhing.

There is indeed a Knowledge of the World that poliſhes the Gentleman; to be learned in Courts and Camps, and in a general Converſation: But the Knowledge that ſecures a Man's Peace and Quiet through all Events, is to be found only in the Bible. That Book will tell us, that "this World is not our Reſting-place, "for it is polluted:" That it muſt not, nor cannot be our Portion: That it is not an equal Price for our Souls, though we could *gain the Whole* of it: That *the World lies in Wickedneſs*, an Enemy to Chriſt and his Intereſt: That it is one of our Enemies we muſt overcome by Faith: That it is of a periſhing Nature, and in continual Change and Variation.

To conſider this World as Philoſophers, it is a fine Building: Every Thing is adjuſted in Number, Weight, and Meaſure. We admire *thy Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers; the Moon, and the Stars, which thou haſt ordained!* But why does the Aſtronomer ſtop ſhort at the viſible Heavens? Why not penetrate farther, to that *Glory* which God hath ſet above thoſe Heavens? *Faith is the Evidence of Things not ſeen* by the Teleſcope. There is the Chriſtian's

Home and Country. Here we are Strangers, and Pilgrims, paſſing out of it. In ſhort, he knows the World beſt, who comes up to that Text, *Love not the World, nor the Things of the World*; and concludes with the great *Mornæus*, that, "If all the World was made for Man, "Man was made for ſomething more than all "the World." Let us balance the Thoughts of what we have loſt, with the Remembrance of what we were made for.

What do we ſee in ourſelves, that we ſhould expect always to be pleaſed? *We are not better than our Fathers.* If I am dead to this World, why am I ſo diſtracted that another is dead out of it? If I am not dead to this World, I ought to be ſo, and to be more concerned for my own Soul than for any dead Friend. Learn to think and ſpeak of this World now, as you will do when you are going out of it. Acknowledge it to be a Place where you muſt daily loſe ſomething, till you have loſt all. And let your Soul aſſuredly conceive, that having had its Original from Heaven, it is one of thoſe Things which muſt, one Day, return thither. (Biſhop *Patrick.*)

While your Sorrows are afloat, turn them into a godly Channel. It will be more eaſy at ſuch a Time, to employ them in mourning for Sin. This is fetching *Meat out of the Eater*, and Comfort out of Trouble. This is making Sorrow, otherwiſe fruitleſs and hurtful, to be of Uſe and Service. So the ſkilful Huſband-

man

man directs the Stream to his Mill, and makes it work, instead of running to waste, or doing Mischief. Perhaps this is one Intention of the Providence. At least, it will be a wise and happy Improvement of it: "Since I am now "so ready to burst out into Tears, I will weep "part of them over a sinful Life." This will make it a healing Wound, and a comforting Sorrow; and at the same Time, give Vent to Nature, and Exercise to Grace.

This is often best done upon our Knees in Prayer: a Time of Affliction is a Time of Prayer. *Is any afflicted? Let him pray. Call upon me in the Day of Trouble, and I will deliver thee. Be careful for nothing* over-much; *but in every Thing, by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God*, Phil. 4. 6. For, *he will regard the Prayer of the Destitute, and not despise their Prayer*; Psal. 102. 17. Thus God invites you to come and drop some of your Tears at his Feet: It is likely he may turn your Sorrows into Joy. It will compose the Spirit, calm the Passions, spiritualize the Affections, strengthen Faith, Hope, and Love; for under the Influence of the other World, we always less regard this.

O Holy Spirit! Is it not thy Name and Office to be *The Comforter?* Does not my Case need Comfort? Art not thou as willing and ready to help, as I am desirous of it? Come, Holy Ghost, and do thine Office of

Conſolation to a poor Soul that needs it. Lord, increaſe my Faith, and in the ſame Proportion my Sorrows will abate, and my Conſolation will abound. Hope and Faith are the only Supports under Things that have no Cure in this World. It is in Believing that we have Joy unſpeakable, and full of Glory. It is in Believing that our Hearts are fortified againſt the Troubles and Pangs that others feel. So Chriſt has connected them together: *Let not your Hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* Lord! I believe; help my Unbelief. I believe in God, and the great Truths of Natural Religion. I believe alſo in Thee, and the peculiar Diſcoveries of the Goſpel. I believe thy Providence manages all Things according to the Purpoſe of thine own Will and Wiſdom. I believe thy Promiſes ſhall be fulfilled, which are a great Support to my Mind. I believe thy watchful Care and never-failing Love to thine own. I believe the Reality and Excellency of the future World, and have good Hope, through Grace, of my Title to it. And how little, how very little, do all theſe lower Things appear, when that World is in full View! The Juſt, who live by Faith and die in Faith, may rejoice in Faith, in the Midſt of their Sorrows. The Joys of Faith are the beſt Remedy againſt the Grief of Senſe. *I had fainted, unleſs I had believed to ſee the Goodneſs of God in the Land of the Living.* It was Faith, the Evidence of Things not ſeen,

and

and the Subſtance of Things hoped for, to which thoſe Heroes of Faith and Patience owe their glorious Character, *Hebrews* 11. We are kept by the Power of God, *through Faith unto Salvation: Wherein ye greatly rejoice; though now for a Seaſon ye are in Heavineſs, through manifold Temptations: That the Trial of your Faith being much more precious than that of Gold that periſheth, though tried with Fire, may be found unto Praiſe, and Honour, and Glory, at the Appearance of Jeſus Chriſt; whom having not ſeen, we love: In whom, though now we ſee him not, yet believing, we rejoice with Joy unſpeakable, and full of Glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. Grief ſays, "The dear Creature is gone!" Faith ſays, "Gone before, not loſt; and that the Meeting again is certain; will be comfortable; and in a little Time; and inſeparable for ever."

It is of great Uſe to conſider the Examples of Patience under Afflictions that are to be met with in ſacred and common Hiſtory. *Take, my Brethren, the Prophets, who have ſpoken to you in the Name of the Lord, for an Example of ſuffering Affliction, and of Patience*, James 5. And the firſt he mentions is *Job*; ver. 11. *Ye have heard of the Patience of Job.* One Part of his Eſtate was plundered by the Inroads of his Enemies; another Part was burnt up with Lightning from Heaven: His Children were cut off at once by a violent Tempeſt, ſeven Sons, and three Daughters: His own Health

was turned into Sickneſs and Corruption; from the Crown of the Head to the Sole of the Foot, were Boils and Sores. He takes a Bit of broken Potſheard to ſcrape himſelf withal, his Fingers being too ſore for that poor Office. And he ſat down among the Aſhes; nor could he there be quiet: He is inſulted by one of the fooliſh Women, and teized with uncharitable Cenſures, and falſe Reaſoning of Friends, who endeavoured to wrangle him out of all that remained of Comfort to him; namely, the inward Conſciouſneſs of his own Integrity. How great were his Trials! How glorious his Patience!

When *Aaron* loſt his two Sons, it is ſaid, *Aaron held his Peace.* When *Eli* heard the Prediction of the Death and Ruin of his Family, he anſwered, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth good unto him.* And *David* ſays, *I was dumb, and opened not my Mouth; becauſe thou didſt it.* *Abraham*'s offering his Son, with that Reſolution, was a great Thing; and God eſtimated it according to his Intention. The Mother of the *Maccabees*, who ſacrificed her ſeven Sons, and ſtood by the Execution, that ſhe might help them through their Martyrdom by her Counſel and Comfort, has ſomething in it extraordinary heroic; ſhe alſo following them herſelf in the ſame glorious Path.

Among the primitive Chriſtians there are many ſuch Inſtances of Suffering and Patience; a Contempt of this World, and Eagerneſs after another,

another; that may well make us aſhamed for our Feebleneſs under leſſer Trials, with much greater Advantages.

But above all, let us keep in our Eye the Pattern of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *Conſider him that endured ſuch Contradiction of Sinners againſt himſelf, leſt ye be weary and faint in your Minds*, Heb. 12. 3. *Looking unto Jeſus, the Author and Finiſher of our Faith*; the Fountain of all our Supplies, and the Pattern of our Behaviour.

It is great Wiſdom not to have theſe Principles to lay in when they are to be employed; nor theſe Supports to get when they ſhould be uſed. It is no wonder People are at a Loſs in a Time of Affliction, when they are Strangers to thoſe Things wherein the beſt Conſolation doth conſiſt. There are no ſuch Cordials as the Chriſtian Religion affords: But they are nothing, if, like Cordials, they are only uſed when a fainting Fit comes. They muſt be daily made our Food, eſtabliſhed Principles, and ſettled Habits; practiſed into a ſecond Nature: Or elſe, we ſhall be like Soldiers unexerciſed before the Attack; or Travellers unprovided at the Moment of the Journey. People, in other Caſes, do not pretend to perform what they have not learned to do; to play upon an Inſtrument they have never practiſed; to perform an Exerciſe they never made themſelves Maſters of: But Chriſtianity they think may be acted *ex tempore*, and upon a ſudden, without ever learning it. But we ſee that will

not

not do, where no Habit of Submiſſion is acquired beforehand. Where the Mind is not prepared by the frequent Actings of Reſignation, Men are to ſeek how to uſe, and how to apply the Principles of Peace and Comfort, if they have them: And much more ſtill at a Loſs, if thoſe Principles are to be got at the very Time they are to be uſed. They are not then capable of the Conſolation ariſing from Principles and Proſpects they are utter Strangers to. They wonder what you mean. They call for the dear Creature that is gone: They grieve, and grieve on; they teize themſelves; they offend God; they have no Comfort under preſent Calamity; they draw more Calamity upon themſelves by the Exceſs or Continuance of their Sorrow; and all for want of preparing a good Foundation againſt ſuch a Time to come.

SECT.

SECT. XII.

The CLOSE.

I Would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them who are aſleep; that you ſorrow not, even as others who have no Hope: For if we believe that Jeſus died, and roſe again; even ſo them alſo who ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him: The Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt, 1 Theſſ. 4. 13, 14. Let them that have no Hope have no Bounds to their Sorrow; and be as Heatheniſh in the Manner of it as they are in its Cauſe and Riſe; namely, the Want of Hope. *The Righteous hath Hope in his Death*; therefore we will not deſpair in our Sorrows. Other People, how many ſoever in Number, or great in Figure, are not to be followed in any Exceſs. A Chriſtian neither lives or dies, rejoices or ſorrows, as others do; according to his own Character, *ſorrows not as do others.*

The Caution againſt immoderate Sorrow, is grounded upon the preſent Condition of the godly Dead; *They ſleep in Jeſus.* And upon the future Meeting we ſhall have; *God will bring them along with him.* And the Certainty of theſe Things; as certain as that *Jeſus died and roſe again.* If we believe one, we muſt believe the other. *For if you believe that Jeſus died and roſe again*, as ſurely you do; you muſt alſo be-

lieve,

lieve, that *they who ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring along with him.* And then we ſhall all be together again.

How ſoft a Name is given to the Chriſtian's Death: And how lovely a Notion of their preſent State! *They ſleep in Jeſus.*

They ſleep. Why do you mourn as if they were extinct; as if they were annihilated, and utterly loſt.

Mourner. But they are loſt to me.

Anſwer. Not for ever; not for a very long Time. *Yet a little while, and he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry.* When they were alive, Sleep and Abſence ſeparated your Relation for a great Part of the Time.

Mourner. But I knew then they would awake from Sleep, and return from Abſence; but now —

Anſwer. And do not you now believe that they will awake from Sleep, and return from Abſence? But when you ſay you knew that they would awake from Sleep, and return from Abſence, you ſpeak in Terms too ſtrong: You might *expect*, indeed, and *hope*, that they would awake and return; but that they would certainly do ſo, is more than any one could inſure, who *knows not what a Day may bring forth.* But this we certainly know, that *they who ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him*, as ſurely as we believe that *Jeſus died and roſe again from the Dead.*

Mourner.

Mourner. But it will be a great while firſt.

Anſwer. What if it be? Is it not worth tarrying for? And it may not be ſo long, neither, as you imagine.

Mourner. But what muſt I do in the mean Time?

Anſwer. Do but theſe two or three Things, and all ſhall be well. See that your own Soul is ſafe: Secure your happy Meeting, that your Separation may not be eternal: Give due Allowance to the Paſſion of Nature, and refuſe not the Help of Grace. Time will do ſomething; Reflection more; and Religion will complete the Work of Reſignation.

They that are aſleep in Jeſus, are as truly alive as you, and in a thouſand Times more excellent Senſe, and to more excellent Purpoſes: For he who died for us, did it for this End, that, *Whether we ſleep, or whether we wake, we ſhould live together with him*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 10. For, *God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living*, Luke 20. 38. *Living*, at preſent, as to the Soul; and ſhall live hereafter in the Body again.

We live together with him, whether we wake or ſleep. They who ſleep in Jeſus, live together with him, in his Preſence, and Enjoyment. In this Reſpect it is, that Chriſt ſays, *He that belives in me, ſhall never die* *: Never die

* According to the Letter of the Tranſlation; though it may be rendered, *He that believes in me, ſhall not die for ever.*

die totally. But when the Body ſleeps in Jeſus, the Soul lives *together with him*; and proceeds in a Life that Death cannot diſcontinue, nor Eternity exhauſt.

Sleep is a Reſt from Wearineſs; from the Cares and Labours of the Day. Such is the Death of the Chriſtian.

Bleſſed are the Dead who die in the Lord; they reſt from their Labours: From the Labours of their Calling, as Men; from the Labours of their Duty, as Chriſtians; becauſe all the Duty that follows in the Separate State, will be without Labour and Wearineſs: From the Labour of oppoſing Sin, and Temptations to it; from all the Troubles of Life, and the Sorrows attending it. It is not merely farewel Huſband, Wife and Children; but farewel Sorrow and Sin; farewel Suffering; farewel Corruption, Weakneſs, Temptation: Welcome *Reſt* from all theſe Troubles.

Sleep is a Refreſhment, and a Reparation of Spirits; and to the better Part Death gives a Refreſhment, that amounts to a Satisfaction. *I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake with thy Likeneſs*, Pſal. 17. 15. Which ſome have underſtood of the Soul's awaking to a nobler Life, upon the Body's falling aſleep.

Sleep is but for a while, and then we wake again; and Death is but for a while, and we awake in the Morning of the Reſurrection. What *David* ſays of his lying down in his Bed

Bed and riſing, we may ſay of our lying down in the Grave and riſing. *I laid me down and ſlept; for the Lord ſuſtained me. So Man lieth down, and awaketh not*, as to the Body, *till the Heavens be no more. If a Man die*, ſays *Job*, *ſhall he live again?* Shall he indeed? If ſo, then I acknowledge there is Conſolation in the Thought, and Wonder in the Work, to ſupport and ſtay my Mind: And therefore, *all the Days of my appointed Time*, that I have to lie in the Grave, there *will I wait till my Change*, by the Reſurrection, *come. For thou ſhalt call*, by the Sound of the laſt Trumpet and Voice of the Lord, *and I will anſwer. Thou wilt have a Deſire to the Work of thine own Hands*, to reſtore and improve it, and not ſuffer it always to lie there in Rubbiſh. Sleep is but a ſhort Death, and Death a longer Sleep to the Body. *The Hour is coming, when all that are in their Graves ſhall hear his Voice, and ſhall come forth: They who have done Good, unto the Reſurrection of Life*, John 5. 28, 29. May they ſleep ſweetly, may they wake joyfully. They were Chriſt's Friends, as well as yours. Allow him to have his Friends about him, as well as you have had them ſo long. It may be, before Chriſt has had them ſo long with him, as ſome of you have had them here below, you will be with them again; and Chriſt, and you, and they, be all together.

I would not have you ignorant, Brethren. Immoderate Sorrow is very much owing to Ignorance, or a Knowledge that has no Effect to govern the Paſſions, which is the ſame thing with Ignorance,

except that it *intitles to the greater Number of Stripes.* Do not behave as if you were ignorant of the frail Nature, and ſhort Duration of the Comforts of this Life; as if you were ignorant of the Chriſtian Hope, Life and Immortality; as if you were ignorant of the preſent State of them that ſleep in Jeſus, how happy it is, and of the certain future Meeting again, with Advantage to all thoſe Excellencies, for which you loved them here ſo well. Prayer will give a Vent to a great deal of that Sorrow that torments others: And Hope will fetch in a great deal of Comfort which *a Stranger intermeddles not with.* They are therefore mentioned together by the Apoſtle; *Rejoicing in Hope; patient in Tribulation; continuing ſtedfaſt in Prayer,* Rom. 12. 12. "He is a miſerable Man indeed, "who is afflicted and cannot pray*:" *And whoſe Days are ſpent without Hope,* Job 7. 6. Where there is no Hope, there is no Comfort: Where there are no Grounds of Hope, there are no Grounds of Comfort. And when the Proſpects of Hope are neglected, and we act as if we were ignorant of them, or knew not how to uſe them, the Grievouſneſs of our Sorrow is very much owing to ourſelves, and is its own Puniſhment, though not the only one we deſerve.

Moderate Sorrow is allowable on account of our own Loſs, even of thoſe who do ſleep in Jeſus. The Apoſtle does not ſay, he would not have them ſorrow at all, but not *as others.* He does not ſay, I would not have you ſorrow at all, but not as *thoſe,*

* *Mr* DOD's *Saying.*

thoſe who have no ſuch Hopes as you have. It is the Regulation of Sorrow that he aims at, and not the total Suppreſſion of it. Grace doth not deſtroy Nature, but refines it: It doth not extinguiſh the Affections and Paſſions, but rectifies and moderates them. To be altogether unconcerned is unnatural; to be ſo overmuch is unchriſtian. They are both hurtful Extremes to any Soil, either to have no Water at all, or to have it overflow and drown the Land round about.

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